PASSAGES OF A WORKING LIFE

DURING HALF A CENTURY.

WITH

A Prelude of Early Reminiscences.

BY

CHARLES KNIGHT.

"There is a history in all men's lives
Figuring the nature of the times deceas'd,
The which observ'd, a man may prophesy,
With a near aim, of the main chance of things
As yet not come to life, which in their seeds
And weak beginnings lie intreasured."
SHAKSPERE, *Henry IV.*, PART II.

VOLUME III.

LONDON:
BRADBURY & EVANS, 11, BOUVERIE STREET.
1865.

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The Third Epoch.

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CHAPTER I.

THE greater portion of my Second Epoch was written at Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight. I had spent the winter there with my family, and quitted it when the spring seemed at once passing into summer, and there was such an outburst of leaf and blossom as I had rarely witnessed in the early days of May. What a region of beauty is the Undercliff in all seasons. Winter rarely touches it with an icy finger. When "yellow leaves, or none, or few" hang upon the boughs that mingle with fallen crags, their bareness is hidden by the glossy ivy. In March it is a land of evergreens; in June a land of "flowers of all hues." It is scarcely a place in which to pass "a working life;" but it is a place in which it is good to look back upon the turmoil of such a life—its vain cares, its disappointed hopes,—and to see what was once deemed the highest good fading into nothingness, and the instant evil melting into a twilight in which good and evil wear the same passionless and almost shapeless features. We unwillingly left the Undercliff, which had long been to me a spot sacred to friendship, when the friend was a

perennial source of delight to all who had the happiness to know him. It has become to me even more sacred, now that he lies in the most beautiful of churchyards, that of his long-loved Bonchurch.

We moved for the summer to a very different scene, but one, to my mind, equally attractive. I commence the story of my Third Epoch on the banks of the Thames, above Kingston. We are the tenants of an artist, whose spacious and quaint studio where I write is fitted by its seclusion for calling up the most abstracted memories of the Past. The river flows rapidly beneath my window, under the shadow of lofty elms which have flourished for a century, and by gay villas which proclaim the changes which have marked the era of rapid communication. And yet the Present is constantly in view, in the continuous stream of human life, which appears to move on as if it were always "a sunshine holiday." In the morning and afternoon happy parties in van or cart are on their way to Hampton Court. As the sun is westering, boat after boat comes forth, some laden with fair ones, not perhaps so fine and fashionable as in the days when "Belinda smiled;" some bearing the solitary youth in his outrigger, who is training for the contest of a regatta; and, now and then, the beautiful eight-oar, rushing up the stream at a wondrous rate, attests the worth of one of the pursuits of Eton and Oxford. Very remarkable are the changed aspects of the Londoners' river from Chelsea to Hampton. Rarely do I behold the team of a dozen horses toiling along the towing-path on the shore opposite my window. Cargoes of heavy goods travel by other modes of conveyance. Railroads carry the chief produce of the country to the

great city, and bring into the country its sea-borne coal, its native porter, its colonial imports. Sometimes I gaze upon the evidence of another great change. Smoke from the funnel of a steam-tug clouds the bright atmosphere, and three or four barges are dragged leisurely along. The pair of swans that I see leading their cygnets fearlessly out of their sheltering nook of osiers attest the progress of change. They are here to enjoy an unpolluted river. Shakspere had

> "seen a swan
> With bootless labour swim against the tide."

It is not the tide which now keeps them far away from what was once the "silver Thames" of the Blackfriars' Stairs. I see nothing of the commercial character of the muddy stream as it glides to the sea by the great market of the world. But I see how it administers to the happiness of a mighty population, who, in our time, have been permitted to enjoy, in "meads for ever crown'd with flowers," gardens of delight and treasures of art, which were once jealously guarded for the exclusive use of a Court. "The heroes and the nymphs" have passed away, for whom the old glades that William planted after his grand Dutch fashion were exclusively held. The alleys of Kew, "carpeted with the most verdant and close-shaven turf," are no longer appropriated by such as the maids of honour who hovered around Queen Caroline when Jeanie Deans entered the private gate with the Duke of Argyle. The pleasure grounds are no longer a sequestered region of verdure, seldom approached by the commonalty, but in which I remember having seen, with the joyous wonder of a school-boy, a herd of kangaroos, feeding fearlessly, with

their young leaping in and out of their pouches. These regal haunts of another age now belong, in the happiest sense of the word, to the people.

Nearly twenty years ago, I rejoiced in a spring morning walk from Richmond to Bushy. Yes!—I could then walk on, unfatigued by a stretch of a dozen miles. My pleasures of the picturesque must now chiefly abide in the remembrance of scenes which float unbidden before my mental eye. My outward vision is somewhat dim; my footsteps are feebler. Yet life is full of enjoyment. The thoughts of my youth have not altogether passed away. The Thames is to me now, as it was long ago, an ever-varying source of gladness. I sit at my open window, now that the second week of July has really brought a summer evening. Gradually the sun casts long shadows of elm and poplar across the stream. The west is all a-glow. The pleasure boats still linger beneath the green banks. The shadows deepen. The plash of the oar becomes less frequent. A crescent moon rises in the south, and I sit watching its course, as it throws a pencil of silver light over the rippling water, and then sinks behind the distant woods. Many weeks of the loveliest weather succeed the passing away of the ungenial cold of June. Never was there a more exquisite English summer. Each day is

"The bridal of the earth and sky."

The feelings of my early days are renewed, as I gaze upon the same stream, upon whose green banks

"Once my careless childhood play'd."

Much of the Romance of fifty years ago is gone; but with it were mingled some aspirations which have not

been delusive. I then wrote—as the leading idea of a Sonnet—

> "Spoil me not, world!—but let my ripening age
> Cling to the green fields and the breathing grove;
> Not with the spell-bound votary's sickly rage,
> But with a calm, severe, and reverent love,
> Such as my gathering woes might still assuage,
> And fit my soul for the bright scenes above."

In these my "chair days" I am not wholly unfitted for out-door pleasures. I can take boat within a few hundred yards of my temporary retreat, and glide down the river, "though gentle, yet not dull," past populous places and sequestered dwellings. The rumble of the train over the railway-bridge at Kingston disturbs me not. The whole scene has the repose of solitude with the gaiety of civilization. I sit in the stern of the light but steady craft, not troubling myself even to steer. I am molested not by the paddle of the steam-boat destroying the calm mirror of the current. *That* belongs to the lower regions of the Thames, and comes not now, with its crowded deck and its brass band, above Kew. I glide on past Teddington. Past Twickenham, whose associations with Pope are gone. Past Ham House, which Hood has immortalized in his exquisite verses, "The Elm Tree." A glimpse of Richmond Hill tells me it is time to return. But I need not be sculled home against stream. The railway will carry me to Kingston in half an hour. Thus with little fatigue I have an afternoon of tranquil enjoyment. A writer in a "Review" which,—joining, with youthful vigour and more than youthful knowledge, the old clever and honest band of Examiners and Spectators,—has rendered weekly criticism a thing to be respected,

and sometimes feared,—delights me, at the time when I am renewing my familiar intercourse with my beloved Thames, by terming it "the most beautiful river in Europe." "Some persons," he says, "vainly talk of the Rhine." He admits that the Rhine is larger, its banks more mountainous, and has in it more water than the Thames, but he utterly denies that it is more beautiful. "In fact, the Thames is the incarnation of refined comforts, and contains the essence of the best of English scenery." *

I have recollections of the Rhine which do not in the slightest degree interfere with my admiration of the Thames, but lead me to enjoy it the more by the force of contrast These recollections take me back to the point of time past, from which I have wandered in a dreamy enjoyment of time present.

On the 27th of June, 1844, I started in company with Mr. Long on an expedition to Germany. My ostensible object, always kept in view but very imperfectly carried out, was to hunt amongst the stores of the German booksellers for "Folk-lore," that might serve as material for the series of the Weekly Volume. My companion's perfect acquaintance with the language promised to be of essential service to me in this research. I was quite sure from previous experience that my friend would be as much disposed as myself to look with cheerful aspect upon whatever we encountered, and not render travelling that misery which sometimes ensues from the fastidiousness of those who are not ready to accommodate themselves to foreign habits. Our steam-boat voyage to Antwerp was accomplished in four-and-twenty

* "Saturday Review," July 2, 1864.

hours. It is now easily performed in eighteen hours. We saw the Cathedral and the Picture Galleries, and for the first time understood, what we could never have learnt at home, how great a painter was Rubens. We reached Liege late at night, having been detained long upon the railway by the imperfect arrangements of that new mode of travelling. There was then only one line of rail from Malines, and at one station we had to wait an hour until another train from Prussia had met us and passed on. My late excellent friend the Chevalier Hebeler had given us a letter or two of introduction, but we found none more valuable than a recommendation to the host of the principal inn at Aix-la-Chapelle to provide us with his best wine and his nicest apartments. We at length reached the Rhine, and saw the great Cathedral at Cologne, in which the work of restoration was then going on very slowly. We enjoyed the hospitalities of a friend at Bonn for a day or two, hearing incessant murmurs against the Prussian government. We then joined the crowd of steamboat tourists. To many of these the Rhine must have appeared monotonous. The real sense of the picturesque is not very widely diffused, even now, when people have ceased to talk about "horrid rocks," as they did in the last century. The voyage up the Rhine was a somewhat tedious affair twenty years ago. Some beguiled the tedium with hock and seltzer-water; some with a book; some with a quiet nap. A friend of mine, a few years before, beheld one ingenious traveller who had a peculiar mode of enjoying the beauties of the noble river. He sat in the cabin hour after hour with the map of the Rhine spread out before him. Ever and anon he called out

to the steward—"Where are we now?" "Bacharach." "All right—here it is"—exultingly putting his finger on the map. "Where are we now?" "Oberwessel." "All right." The castle of Rheinstein did not lure him from his task, nor the vine-covered hills where Charlemagne planted the Burgundy grape. Happy man!—as well employed perhaps as many a tourist who is hurried along, *to do* this noted place and that—sees all, and sees nothing. We left the steam-boat at St. Goar; and the next day realized what was the most delicious part of our trip—a walk for twenty miles amidst exquisite scenery, past which the railway now whisks us in an hour. Eighteen years later, as I glanced from the train at the White Horse at Bingen, I longed again to stop for a day or two's enjoyment of its abundant good cheer; but then had I rested there I could not have climbed the Niederland and there looked upon what Bulwer calls the noblest landscape in the world. We were at length housed in Frankfort. The shops of the regular booksellers offered very few serviceable things for the Weekly Volumes that could not as readily have been procured in London; but in dirty back lanes there was an occasional shop in which the humblest sort of popular literature—of the same character as the old *chap-books* of our forefathers—was to be found. I filled a box at a venture with some score of volumes and sheets, which appeared candidates for cheapness in their whitey-brown paper and coarse printing and rude woodcuts. The greater number turned out to be rubbish. Our experience at Frankfort led us to conclude that little could be gained from an extension of our journey to the great publishing mart of

Leipsic, so we turned our faces homeward. This holiday trip was productive of no commercial good, but its pleasant recollections are "a joy for ever."

There was no lack of abundant materials for the new series, in copyrights in which I had an interest. Some might be reprinted without alteration, others could be adapted by their writers. Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George the Third; his Dialogues on Instinct, and his edition of Paley's Natural Theology, were of this character. Mr. Lane's Modern Egyptians, and Sir John Davis's Manners and Customs of the Chinese, were in the same way valuable works, expensive in their original form, now brought down to the lowest cost. Mr. Craik, out of the extension of his chapters on Literature in the Pictorial History of England, produced six valuable little volumes, which have since been reprinted, as they well deserve to be, in a more costly shape for the library. One of the most original and important works in this series was the Biographical History of Ancient and Modern Philosophy by Mr. G. H. Lewes. The increasing reputation of Mr. Lewes as a writer of eminent ability and extensive acquirements was, in a great degree, founded upon this work, which, with large improvements, has taken a permanent rank as being at once learned and readable. In this series I included several summaries of great writers, such as Spenser and Bacon, by Mr. Craik; Molière and Racine, by Madame Blaz de Bury; Chaucer, by Mr. John Saunders; Hudibras, by Mr. Ramsay. The small comparative sale of such volumes was to me a tolerably satisfactory proof that abridgments and analyses of standard authors are not likely to be

successful. Unless important works are inaccessible from their rarity or their bulk, the greater number of readers—and these perhaps are the more judicious —are ill-content with hashes and essences. In my early publishing days, I privately circulated a prospectus of "The Analytical Library of the Great Writers, Ancient and Modern," which thus commenced: "One of the most valuable methods of conveying information to general readers is partially accomplished in the Reviews which are published quarterly in this country: we allude to the principle of taking up some standard book, to present a pretty complete view of the subjects upon which it treats, with specimens that may convey a notion of the matter and style of the Author. What is thus incidentally done in some of our best critical works, we propose to carry much farther in the present publication—much farther, indeed, than was done in the 'Retrospective Review,' which, like 'The British Librarian' of Oldys, meritoriously adopted the principle of reviewing our past instead of our current literature. But, instead of a 'Review,' we propose to publish a Library: instead of presenting a Great Writer in an *Article*, we shall exhibit him in a *Volume*." It was well for me that this project was not matured into a costly series, for, if I judge rightly now, it would not have commanded a remunerative sale. There are some works of imagination that are almost unknown to the present race of readers. Who can avoid lamenting that Tom Jones, and Roderick Random, and Tristram Shandy are utterly gone out of the popular view. But abridgments! No, no!

Amongst the original works was one which was an

exception to the general character of the books in my series, which for the most part carried the recommendation of popular names as their authors. This was "Memoirs of a Working Man." It was writen by a tailor of the name of Carter. He was the author of one of the little books published by Knight and Co., called the "Guide to Trade," and had been recommended to me in 1840 as a highly deserving man, carrying on a little business for himself, with a dependent family, and struggling with the severest ill health. In the introduction which I wrote to the "Memoirs of a Working Man," I stated that when the author brought to me his manuscript, which he wished to be published by subscription, I carefully read his simple record of an uneventful life, advised him to curtail such particulars as could only be interesting to himself and his family, but on no account to suppress what would be interesting to all—the history of the formation of his habits of thought, and thence of his system of conduct—the development of his intellectual and moral life. In conclusion I said: "Upon receiving the Manuscript thus altered and completed, I proposed to publish it in the Weekly Volume. This is the extent of my editorial duty. I have not added nor have I altered, a single word. The purity of its style is one of the most remarkable characteristics of this little book."

I desire to make a few remarks upon the question of encouraging the class of those who are called, for want of a more definite name, working men, in attempts at literary composition under a system of rivalry for prizes. The example of Thomas Carter, and of many others who belong to the ranks of self-

educated men, is sufficient to prove that if they have talent and good sense, with a reasonable proportion of knowledge, they will want no artificial stimulus to attain some sort of success as public writers upon subjects with which they are really acquainted. After the death of Sir Robert Peel, there was a penny subscription for a memorial by working men to the great minister who had carried the repeal of the Corn Laws. The late Mr. Joseph Hume, who was the treasurer of this fund, invited me to meet some gentlemen at his house to discuss the application of the money raised. It was proposed and was very nearly carried, that several prizes should be announced for the best memoir of Sir Robert Peel by working men. I was almost alone in opposing the project, but I finally got Mr. Hume to be of my opinion. The proceeds of the subscription were ultimately placed at the disposal of the Council of University College, and being invested by them in public securities, the interest is annually applied to the purchase of books to be presented to one or more Mechanics' Institutes. When I witnessed a remarkable episode in the regular course of proceedings at the Bradford Meeting for the Promotion of Social Science in 1859, I became more than ever convinced that the hardy plant of uncultivated talent does not require to be transferred to a forcing-house to bud and fructify. Lord Brougham, as President of that meeting, was the principal performer in a great ceremony, of distributing to working men certain prizes for original compositions proposed by Mr. Cassell, a publisher of low-priced serials. To myself, as well as to many others, this appeared something more than a mistake—as the promotion of a social

evil. The venerable President proclaimed this trading speculation—this cheap mode of advertising—as a wonderful example of disinterested devotion to the cause of knowledge for the people, on the part of one who might be regarded as the great educator of his time. *Palmam qui meruit ferat.* The *prize* system has become one of the notable expedients of publishing quackery. The word prize is altogether a delusion. It tempts scores of uneducated young persons to enter upon a competition for a reward for literary labours which seems to them magnificent. They are wholly ignorant of the nature of the literary market, in which the real prizes are ready to be earned by those who possess the requisite qualifications. Instead of being an encouragement to struggling genius, it holds out a temptation to mediocrity to travel out of its proper road to honour. The competition for a prize essay, or a prize novel, is entered upon with the assured belief of scores of self-deceivers that they can become great writers—"upon instinct." I think it may be of use if I here print a portion of a letter which I wrote, in 1856, in answer to a curious application which I received from a young man of the same unqualified class of literary aspirants as were the winners of the prizes distributed at Bradford. "Why you apply to me for advice I know not. You want to become, in some way or other, professionally connected with literature. You are obliged to spend your time in a warehouse. You want to write for a periodical that you may be enabled to pursue your studies. My advice to you is to stick to your honest calling, for you evidently labour under some terrible mistake with regard to what you call 'literature.' If you

would take the trouble to look in Johnson's Dictionary, you would find 'literature' to be 'learning, skill in letters;' and therefore a professor of 'literature' must obtain 'learning' and 'skill in letters' by study, before he presumes to be a writer."

The series of the Weekly Volume, although it did not involve any considerable loss, was certainly not a commercial success. "Why Mr. Knight did not profit largely by the speculation, is a problem yet to be solved," said the writer of a paper on "Literature for the People." The solution was that the people did not sufficiently buy the series. There were not twenty volumes that reached a sale of ten thousand, and the average sale was scarcely five thousand. Considerable sums were spent upon new copyrights, and for the permission to include in the series high-priced books, previously published by me. The volumes were not cheap enough for the humble, who looked to mere quantity. They were too cheap for the genteel, who were then taught to think that a cheap book must necessarily be a bad book. Although very generally welcomed by many who were anxious for the enlightenment of the humbler classes, the humbler classes themselves did not find in them the mental aliment for which they hungered. They wanted fiction, and the half dozen historical novelets of the series were not of the exciting kind which in a few years became the staple product of the cheap press. It was perhaps as useless as it was unwise to battle against this growing taste, which was not limited to hard-handed mechanics and their families. In 1854, when I was inclined to think too harshly of the popular appetite for fiction, which was stimulated by the coarsely seasoned food of such publications as

the 'London Journal,' Mr. Dickens remonstrated with me in the most earnest and affectionate spirit. I extract from a letter of his, marked by his accustomed good sense, a passage which deserves the serious consideration of those who look too severely upon the exuberance of this species of popular literature. "The English are, so far as I know, the hardest worked people on whom the sun shines. Be content if in their wretched intervals of leisure they read for amusement and do no worse. They are born at the oar, and they live and die at it. Good God, what would we have of them!"

At the time of the issue of the Weekly Volume, the sale of books at railway stations was unknown. Seven years afterwards it had become universal. Then, in the vicinity of great towns where there was a railway station, the shelves of the newspaper vender were filled with shilling volumes known as the 'Parlour Library,' 'The Popular Library,' 'The Railway Library,' 'The Shilling Series.' In their bulk of thin paper and close printing they would appear to be twice as cheap as my volumes, but, except in very rare instances, they had involved no expense of copyright. In 1851 I wrote: "It is easy to foresee that the public, having got into the habit of purchasing this class of books, to the great damage of the circulating libraries, will not rest content with American piracies; and will begin to inquire whether our native authors cannot write as well, and become as popular, as the Washington Irvings, and Pauldings, and Coopers of the New World." In a few years, a most remarkable development of cheapness in books, especially in works of fiction, was accomplished without "the great damage of the circulating libraries."

Wonderful organizations of the circulating library system presented a far greater encouragement to original authorship than at the period when the few rich purchased books for their sole use. The day of furniture books was almost past. When the circulating libraries had done their work of "the season," then came the cheap reprint. This was the crucial test of an author's popularity. My work as a publisher was finished before these times arrived, which are certainly more favourable for publishing enterprise than those of my own commercial experience.

Somewhat before the commencement of the Weekly Volume, I was engaged for several years in the publication of a series of popular books which had a very large sale, but were little known to the general reading public. They were picture books, especially adapted for sale, in the neighbourhood of the great manufacturing towns and other populous districts, by the class of book-hawkers known as canvassers. The books usually vended in this way, by the persevering activity of the agents of the canvassing booksellers, had become of a somewhat improved character, compared with those issued by the Number-publishers of twenty years previous, of whom I have described one of the most eminent of the class.* There were four books, forming seven volumes in folio, which I included under the generic name of "The New Orbis Pictus," in imitation of that work of Comenius, which, after the lapse of two centuries, still holds its place amongst the educational books of continental Europe. That work, which was once amongst the most popular

* "Passages, &c" Vol. I. p. 277.

of books, originally contained several hundred rude wood cuts with appropriate descriptions. My series comprised the following separate books: "Pictorial Museum of Animated Nature:" "Pictorial Sunday-Book:" "Old England:" "Pictorial Gallery of Arts." I told the public that what the Orbis Pictus had imperfectly accomplished was fully carried out in this series, in which was accumulated the largest body of eye-knowledge that had ever been brought together, consisting in the whole of twelve thousand engravings. To derive the full commercial advantage of such a series of picture-books, I must have become exclusively a canvassing publisher, with all the complex organization involved in having a vast body of subordinate agents distributed throughout England and Scotland, who have every facility for defrauding their principals unless watched and checked at every turn of their operations. These books have passed into the hands of canvassing publishers proper, and what I learn of their great and continued sale is sufficient to show me that there was a mine of wealth requiring to be dug out by a peculiar species of industry. It is satisfactory to me to think that these books may have presented to some portions of the population—who without the canvasser's importunity would never have expended a monthly shilling upon literature—sources of instruction and amusement as various and extensive as my general title implies—The Pictorial World. Of this series I was necessarily the editor. The descriptions in each book were for the most part confided to persons of literary habits and competent knowledge—these were, Mr. William C. L. Martin for Natural History, Dr. Kitto for Sacred History, Mr. Dodd for

the Useful Arts, Mr. Wornum for the Fine Arts, and Mr. John Saunders for our National Antiquities. I must mention, however, that the first Book of "Old England" and part of the second, were written by myself. At the period of its publication there was an awakening feeling for the preservation of our historical monuments. The barbarous neglect which had permitted so many druidical remains, such as Abury, to be in great part destroyed; so many traces of the Roman occupation to be buried; and so many of the noble ecclesiastical edifices of the Norman era to be defaced; this ignorant apathy was rapidly giving place to a just reverence for the past. Some of the visits which I then made to remarkable places, for the purpose of writing or superintending this pictorial and descriptive work on our antiquities, had been preceded by glimpses of the same nature for other literary objects, and were followed by excursions of a similar character for a work completed in 1849—"The Land we Live in." This was an important preparation for writing the history of England. It was to me a branch of my historical education. As a rapid view of some of the localities connected with great events, and with eminent persons, may have interest for other historical students, I may not improperly devote a future chapter to the recollection of occasional visits, for the gratification of more than a passing curiosity, to sites which call up the associations that belong to the "chronicles of eld."

CHAPTER II.

IN 1847 I commenced editing and publishing, in monthly parts, a work which furnished me with a really delightful occupation for fifty-two weeks. "Half-Hours with the Best Authors, Selected and Arranged, with Short Biographical and Critical Notices," has had, and still has, so large a circulation that it is unnecessary for me to describe the character of a book so universally known. The complete work contains specimens of three hundred various writers, of which number about forty were living at the period of its publication. From many of these, his contemporaries, the editor received permission to borrow some connected extracts from their writings which would occupy about half an hour's ordinary reading. Judging from the warm expressions of the greater number of these writers, even the most eminent felt something of satisfaction in being included amongst the standard authors who have built up the greatest literature of the modern world. In a postscript I thus spoke of my "short biographical notices;"—"Their brevity must necessarily render them incomplete and unsatisfactory; but they have not been written without serious thought and an earnest desire to be just. There are many who will differ from the Editor in his estimate of some writers, particularly of the more recent.

But of one fault he is not likely to be accused—that of a cold and depreciating estimate of those whom he has selected as 'The Best Authors.' If his admiration should appear too hearty, he may best excuse himself by saying that the *nil admirari* never appeared to him the great principle of mental satisfaction; and that, even with Horace against him, he is content to bear with the imputation, in such matters, of being—

'One who loved not wisely, but too well.'"

Nearly two decades have passed since, for the objects of this work, I resolved to enlist in the great company of the illustrious dead some of those who then wore their laurel wreath without the cypress. Of many of these the reputations had been achieved at the very commencement of what we now term the Victorian Era. Others who had been battling their way against adverse criticism in the period of the third and fourth Georges, had now attained their just honours amongst a younger generation "ever seeking something new." To one who has lived in both periods, it is pleasant to look back upon the gradual establishment in his own mind of the conviction that those who were the passing novelties of one time would become the great classics of another. The days were long passed when, with me and no doubt with many others, every pleasure and almost every duty was laid aside to plunge into a new series of "Tales of my Landlord," or to devour a new canto of "Childe Harold." Others were rising up in the first years of the Queen, to render the fame of Scott and Byron a little pale in the eyes of a new race of readers. Dickens I described as "one who came to

fill up the void which Scott had left." Of Tennyson, who at the present day has sent Byron into the shade, I wrote in 1848—"He has not published much, he does not live upon the breath of popular applause, but he has more ardent admirers than any living poet, with the exception of Wordsworth."

As I open the four volumes of Half-Hours and review the short notices of contemporaries, I find amongst them many with whom I have had the transient pleasure of an occasional acquaintance or the happiness of a continued friendly intercourse. Let me mention a few of each class, taking the names, for the most part, in the order in which they present themselves in "Half-Hours."

I have met Walter Savage Landor at the table of a common friend. Although he was then a septuagenarian (I read his Count Julian when I was a boy), he was in the full vigour of his understanding. The variety and richness of his knowledge were as manifest in his real as in his "Imaginary Conversations." He could sustain a literary discussion with wonderful acuteness and felicity of illustration. Sometimes indeed with a leaven of those paradoxical opinions, in which he seemed to delight with a wilfulness of exaggeration. Whilst I write this, his death is recorded at the age of ninety. Dickens has painted him, with scarcely any exaggeration, in his "Boycroft." Leigh Hunt could have known nothing of the early friend of Southey when, in the "Feast of the Poets," he termed him, "one Mr. Landor," and made his name rhyme with "gander."

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, I never saw but once. It was about the time when he first went to dwell with Mr. Gillman at Highgate. To me, then a very

young man, the outpourings of his mighty volume of words seemed something more than eloquence; and I went away half crazed by his expositions of the power of the human will in producing such effects upon matter as were once ascribed to magic. We are more familiar in the present day with wonders such as some of those he had seen or heard of in Germany; but his belief that the magnetic needle would follow the finger of a bared hand and arm, did not perhaps demand so great an exercise of faith as the stately walks of dining tables and the nimble dances of arm chairs. The Cagliostros of the human race have ever been a thriving family. Coleridge died in 1834. I went to live at Highgate the year after. During a few years' friendly intercourse with Mr. Gillman and his most amiable and intelligent wife, I was deeply impressed with the ascendancy which a man of the highest genius can obtain over those with whom he is brought into daily contact. Their tastes were in some respects essentially different from his. His irregular habits must often have been exceedingly annoying. But this was a remarkable case of hero-worship, in which the devotion was as enthusiastic as in any instance of the few heroes whom the universal consent of mankind has placed upon the loftiest pedestal. I was always enamoured of Coleridge as a poet, and had become convinced, when I wrote my notice of him in the Half-Hours, that there was "no man of our own times who has incidentally, as well as directly, contributed more to produce that revolution in opinion, which has led us from the hard and barren paths of a miscalled utility, to expatiate in the boundless luxuriance of those regions of thought which belong to the

spiritual part of our nature, and have something in them higher than a money value." I often thought of Coleridge as I rambled where he had mused for many a year—the pleasant meadows and green lanes near Caen Wood. I used sometimes to think that if it had been my fortune to have dwelt at Highgate at an earlier period, I might have ventured to accost him as the boy Keats did, to crave the honour of shaking hands (although I could not say "I too am a poet") with one who had so largely filled my mind with images of beauty and lessons of wisdom.

I have incidentally mentioned my friend Dr. Arnott in the second volume of these "Passages." In extracting for the Half-Hours the account of the Barometer from his "Elements of Physics" I said, "When we consider that this excellent book can only be completed at the rare intervals of leisure in a most arduous professional life—that at the moments when the physician is not removing or mitigating the sufferings of individuals, he is labouring for the benefit of all by such noble inventions as the Hydrostatic Bed—we can only hope that the well-earned repose which wise men look to in the evening of their day, will give opportunity for perfecting one of the books best calculated to advance the education of the people that the world has seen." Amidst his engagements as a physician and his devotion to science, Dr. Arnott had still leisure for social enjoyment, as every studious man who does not wish to become an ascetic must seek with moderation. There are many who may remember with the same delight as myself the pleasant Thursday dinners at his house in Bedford Square. Here was no osten-

tatious display, but the warmest welcome. Here was no oppression of great talkers, but men of very various pursuits and acquirements contributed each in his degree to the amusement of a small listening circle. Of science there was no engrossing parade. Our genial host seemed to say, in the words of Milton to Cyriack Skinner:

> "To day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
> In mirth that, after, no repenting draws;
> Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause."

In the wide range of Dr. Arnott's acquaintance, curiously assorted guests would sometimes be found at his board. Of such was the philosophic Brahmin, Rammohun Roy, who was enabled to reconcile the best principles of his native faith with the religion of Christians, and Robert Owen, who had proclaimed the negation of all religious belief as essential to the establishment of his co-operative system of universal love. There was much in the real benevolence of these two men, so different in education and habits, which drew them together with something like a cordial sympathy. But once, when we were in the drawing-room, a quiet talk between them upon the principle of co-operation suddenly broke out into a loud discussion to which we all listened with surpassing interest. The Rajah held his ground with great ability, and with no common knowledge of political economy, against Owen's doctrine, that in the competitive principle were to be found all the crimes and miseries of society. The persevering logician with his common sense was too strong for the kind hearted visionary. Owen, worn out with objections, at length exclaimed, "*Roger, Roger*, you are not a

practical man!" The reproach from such lips, and the peculiar pronunciation of the Hindu title, were too much for the gravity of any of us. Robert Owen was a man too respectable to provoke laughter except on such a rare occasion as this—even from those who would smile at his enthusiasm.

Of Wordsworth in the Half-Hours I thus wrote:—"The greatest name in the literature of our own age is William Wordsworth. He has at last influenced the world more enduringly than any of his contemporaries, although his power has been slowly won." I was diligently reading Wordsworth fifty years ago in spite of the sneers of Jeffrey. I can read him now without feeling, as younger men may feel, that he is tedious. The universality of Wordsworth has sent his poetry into the homes of the poor and lowly, and that vital quality will keep him fresh and green for the few, and possibly for the many, of coming ages. During the long course of years in which Wordsworth was to me as it were a household presence, I never saw him until 1849. I was then visiting Miss Martineau at Ambleside. Early on a bright morning, a tall man, not bowed by age but having the deep furrows of many winters on his massive face, entered the house. I knew at once that it was the great poet, for no ordinary Dalesman with his stout staff and his clouted shoon would present a countenance so remarkable in its majestic simplicity. He was then in his seventy-ninth year. After a pleasant chat with my hostess and myself, he asked me to walk with him to his house at Rydal Mount. As we passed along the road the cottagers and the children saluted him with a familiar and yet respectful greeting. He was their old friend, who had lived amongst

them from the beginning of the century; who had interested himself in their feelings and habits; and who, in this constant and affectionate intercourse, was not likely to be moved by the exhortations of an Edinburgh Reviewer. He would not be likely to alter his way of life at the bidding of Mr. Jeffrey, and "condescend to mingle a little more with the people who were to read and judge of his poems, instead of confining himself almost entirely to the society of the Dalesmen, and cottagers, and little children, who formed their subjects." When I spent this pleasant morning with the great Lake poet, he had a little condescended to move out of his seclusion from the gay world to go to court in his capacity of Poet Laureate. He laughed a little at the idea of his state costume, and I really thought that the home-spun suit of Wonderful Robert Walker would have been quite as becoming. Yet Wordsworth was a thorough gentleman. He shewed me his favourite books and the antique heir-looms of his study, with the grace of an unaffected desire to bestow pleasure on a chance visitor; he pointed out the most exquisite points of view from his own garden; he sat with me for half an hour on the somewhat dilapidated seat that overlooks the Lower Fall at Rydal. He talked with a deep tenderness of Hartley Coleridge, the gifted and the unfortunate, who had died in the winter before. I was surprised at the very slight acquaintance with the more eminent writers of the previous ten or twenty years which he manifested. Of the novelists he appeared to know nothing. Of the poets he might be excused for not giving an opinion. He has been reproached with wilfully ignoring the merits of his contemporaries. I doubt

whether it might with justice be attributed either to envy or to affectation when he told me that he felt no interest in any modern book except in Mr. Layard's Nineveh, which had then been recently published. I was fortunate in the opportunity of seeing this great man in that mountain home where he was best seen. This was only a year before he was laid in Grasmere churchyard. They say that the lowly mounds beneath which rest with him the remains of his wife and his sister—close by which honoured graves Hartley Coleridge was buried—are trampled down by rude visitors—tourists perhaps, but without the reverence that belongs to those who come to look upon such scenes of beauty, even were there no higher motive for reverence in all the associations of this holy ground.

In 1847 the literary reputation of Macaulay, then famous as an orator, was built upon his "Lays of Ancient Rome," and his "Essays" from the Edinburgh Review. I described these essays as having attained a success far higher than any other contributions to the periodical works of our day. Their success, indeed, gave an impulse to this somewhat novel mode of investing the ephemeral productions of the Reviewer with a separate dignity befitting them for a permanent position in a library. The commercial importance of this system was sufficiently ascertained when Mr. Macaulay inserted in Lord Mahon's Copyright Bill that clause which rendered the consent of the author necessary to the re-publication, in a separate shape, of his contributions to a Review or Magazine. This was a salutary arrangement for Letters and literary men. But Macaulay was to attain a far higher reputation than that of the brilliant

essayist. The first and second volumes of his History of England were published in 1849. The third and fourth volumes in 1855. The fifth volume was a posthumous fragment. When the youthful contributor to the Quarterly Magazine of 1824 had taken his position in the political world, our once friendly intercourse was necessarily suspended. He took no part, and probably felt no interest, in the Useful Knowledge Society, although many of his intimate friends were active members. After his return from India, I had often a cordial greeting from him, if we accidentally met, but I never had the opportunity of listening, during his maturer years, to that wonderful affluence of conversation for which the Scholar of Trinity was as remarkable as the Cabinet Minister. I saw him laid in his last resting place in Poet's Corner on a raw December day of 1859. He had lived twenty years longer than his youthful friend and colleague, Praed. There was time for Macaulay's fame to culminate, but it must always be a matter of regret that his great historical work has not given to the grand epic of the Revolution a certain completeness, by bringing up the splendid narrative to the accession of the House of Brunswick. We cannot

> "call up him that left half-told
> The story."

No one else is fitted to tell it.

Amongst the "Best Authors" are some of whom the traces of our intimacy are indicated with more or less fullness in my previous volumes. Leigh Hunt, John Wilson, Thomas De Quincey, Thomas Hood, are of this number. I may glean a few sentences from the Half-Hours to mark my opinion of their literary

excellence. "Mr. Hunt," I said, "who has borne much adversity with a cheerfulness beyond all praise, writes as freshly and brilliantly as ever." I added "Long may those unfailing spirits which are the delight of his social and family circle, be the sunshine of his old age." These unfailing spirits made the great charm of his conversation. The stream flowed gently on, always clear, often sparkling. His vivacity frequently approached to wit, and if there were the slightest touch of satire in his opinions of books or men, it was so subtle and delicate that it was more like the fencing with foils of Congreve's fine gentlemen, than the sword thrusts of one who in his time was foremost in the lists of bold public writers. John Wilson's prose writings, as collected in "The Recreations of Christopher North," are mentioned by me with a warmth of admiration that to many must appear somewhat extravagant. "It would be difficult to point to three volumes of our own times that have an equal chance of becoming immortal." I might have spoken with more moderation had I anticipated that the political partisanship, so fierce and so unscrupulous, of the "Noctes" would have been reproduced in a permanent form, to make us think less of the wit, the fancy, the genial criticism, and the unaffected pathos of their principal writer. Of De Quincey I expressed a deep regret that the unfortunate habit which forms the subject of his "Confessions" should have prevented him from producing "any great continuous book, worthy of his surpassing powers." But whoever carefully reads the fifteen volumes of his collected works will scarcely join in this regret. In his case, as in that of a few other persons, his death was necessary to place him in the

rank of a great classic. Thomas Hood had been dead three years when I published the Half-Hours, and there said of him—"He was brought up an engraver; he became a writer of 'Whims and Oddities,'—and he grew into a poet of great and original power. The slight partition which divides humour and pathos was remarkably exemplified in Hood. Misfortune and feeble health made him doubly sensitive to the ills of his fellow-creatures." On several occasions we had corresponded; I had met him a few times in general society, but I had never the opportunity of cultivating a closer acquaintance. I have heard one who was well fitted by his intimacy to judge of Hood's social qualities, speak of the beauty of his domestic life. We had a mutual admiration of his humour and his pathos, and above all could appreciate that exquisite sensibility which made Hood touch the sore places of the wretched with such a tender and delicate hand. That one was Douglas Jerrold.

Although my close intercourse and unbroken friendship with Jerrold was a source of happiness to me for ten years, it was not until 1845 that I even knew his person. In November of that year I had a special invitation to a great Soirée of the Manchester Athenæum, to be held in the Free Trade Hall. I was the guest of Mr. James Heywood, who subsequently represented North Lancashire. As I was better pleased to stay in the pleasant country house of my host than go much into the smoky metropolis of cotton, I was not thrown into the society of the contributors to "Punch," who were assembled there, and might read their names in enormous placards advertised as the great stars of

the coming meeting. "Punch," out of a not very promising commencement in 1841, had in four years risen into an unequalled popularity. Jerrold was, however, one of its earliest contributors, a paper of his appearing in the second number. As the publication went on we may every now and then trace some of those flashes of merriment, that biting satire, and those pleadings for the wretched, which characterized his avowed writings. "The Story of a Feather" which commenced in 1843, and "Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures" with which the volume for 1845 opened, raised the reputation of "Punch" to a height which showed how, in a periodical work, the happy direction and the peculiar genius of one man may carry it far beyond the reach of ordinary competition. I described in "Half Hours" the "Caudle Lectures" as "admirable examples of the skill with which character can be preserved in every possible variety of circumstances." It was almost universally known who was the author of this remarkable series, so that when Douglas Jerrold rose in the Free Trade Hall to address an assembly of three thousand people, the shouts were so continuous that the coolest platform-orator might have lost for a moment his presence of mind. I looked upon a slight figure bending again and again, as each gust of applause seemed to overpower him and make him shrink into himself. Mr. Serjeant Talfourd was in the Chair, and had delivered an eloquent address which the local reporters called "massive," and which by some might have been deemed "heavy." The audience was perhaps somewhat impatient even of the florid language of the author of "Ion," for they wanted to hear the great wit who sat on the

edge of the platform, and whose brilliant eye appeared as if endeavouring to penetrate the obscure distance of that vast hall, the extremity of which he might possibly have calculated his somewhat feeble voice would be unable to reach. When the moment had at last arrived in which he was called upon to give utterance to his thoughts, he hesitated, rambled into unconnected sentences, laboured to string together some platitudes about education, and was really disappointing, even to common expectations, until the genius of the man attained the ascendancy. Apostrophising the enemies of education, he exclaimed—"Let them come here and we will serve them as Luther served the Devil—we will throw inkstands at their heads." The effect was marvellous, not only upon his hearers but upon the speaker. He recovered his self-possession and succeeded in making a very tolerable speech. A few nights afterwards, I had to take the Chair at the "City of London Literary and Scientific Institution," in Aldersgate Street, and I said there what I have never ceased to feel. I find it reported that I said, "I had just returned from attending the splendid soirée of the Athenæum at Manchester. I had felt that it was a rare, and perhaps unequalled, spectacle—that of three or four thousand ladies and gentlemen comfortably seated in a vast hall glittering with light, to listen to the addresses of popular writers. But, at the same time, I could not avoid feeling that there was something in this display which would not bear the test of sober examination. I ventured to think that it was a mistake to tempt authors out of their proper sphere to come forward as orators—to ask them to play upon an instrument to which they were unaccus-

tomed—and, of necessity, to feel a proportionate disappointment when some one, who had afforded unmixed delight in his own vocation, was found, as a speaker, not to drop all pearls and rubies from his mouth, like the princess in the fairy tale." If it be replied to this argument that Mr. Dickens is the most effective speaker at a public dinner that was ever listened to with general admiration, I will answer, that at the opening of the Manchester Free Library in 1852, I heard one of the greatest masters of the English language utterly break down in addressing a large audience, and take his seat in hopeless despair of being able to complete the sentence which he had begun. That speaker was the author of "Vanity Fair."

In the "Half Hours" I have described the first great novel of William Makepeace Thackeray as "a masterly production—the work of an acute observer —sound in principle, manly in its contempt of the miserable conventionalities that make our social life such a cold and barren thing for too many. Never was the absurd desire for display, which is the bane of so much real happiness, better exposed than in the writings of Mr. Thackeray. He is the very antagonism of that heartless pretence to exclusiveness and gentility which acquired for its advocates and expositors the name of 'the silver-fork school.' Such authors as this produce incalculable benefit, and will do much to bring us back to that old English simplicity—the parent of real taste and refinement—which sees nothing truly to be ashamed of but profligacy and meanness." Of the private character and conversation of the author of the series of fictions—which will most probably hold their place till some

great revolution of opinion sends a new generation to seek for delight in writers of a different school from this great master—I know too little to speak with any authority. In saying here what I did observe in Thackeray, I hope not to be considered as going out of my way to add my voice to the general accord of panegyric which has naturally followed the sudden deprivation we have recently endured. My conviction was, that beneath an occasional affectation of cynicism, there was a tenderness of heart which he was more eager to repress than to exhibit; that he was no idolater of rank in the sense in which Moore was said dearly to love a lord, but had his best pleasures in the society of those of his own social position—men of letters and artists; and that, however fond of "the full flow of London talk," his own home was the centre of his affections. He was a sensitive man, as I have seen on more than one occasion. One, I cannot forbear mentioning. We were dining at the table of Mr. M. D. Hill, on the 9th of April, 1848, the evening before the expected outbreak of Chartism in London. The cloth had scarcely been removed, when he suddenly started up and said, "Pray excuse me, I must go. I left my children in terror that something dreadful was about to happen. I am unfit for society. Good night."

Of our other great novelist, I wrote in "Half Hours"—"Dickens, as well as every writer of enduring fiction, must be judged by his power of producing a complete work of Art, in which all the parts have a mutual relation. Tested by this severe principle, some of his creations may be held imperfect,—written for periodical issue and not published entire,—hurried occasionally, and wanting in proportion. But from

the 'Pickwick' of 1837 to the 'Dombey' of 1848, there has been no failing of interest and effect; his characters are 'familiar in our mouths as household words;' his faults are for the critical eye." The "Sketches by Boz" were published in 1836. I was then too occupied by many cares to pay much attention to passing novelties, and I scarcely knew of Charles Dickens as a writer likely to rise into great celebrity. His uncle, Mr. Barrow, was the conductor of "The Mirror of Parliament," and sometimes meeting him at the printing-office of Mr. Clowes, he would tell me of his clever young relative, who was the best reporter in the Gallery. There was an old man of the name of Knox who used to carry about new periodical works to suburban shops, and by this means, at a time when there was far less activity amongst small retail booksellers, he would in some degree force a sale of a new serial work. Three or four numbers of the "Pickwick Papers" had been published when the pedestrian dealer, who saved the little shop-keeper the trouble of going to the Row on a Magazine-day, shewed me a large bundle of shilling parts which he had just purchased of Messrs. Chapman and Hall. With a pardonable vanity he ascribed much of the success of "Pickwick" to his own indefatigable exertions, for he was not content with providing a supply for the first of the month, but went again and again the round of the suburbs from Whitechapel to Chelsea. Mr. Dickens's first great venture was very soon beyond the necessity of any extra trade exertion, to command a sale much larger than any work of fiction had previously attained; not even excepting the Waverley Novels in their cheaper form.

I am scarcely aware when my personal knowledge of Mr. Dickens as a public man passed into the intimacy of private life. We were on tolerably familiar terms when I met him at the Shakspere Club, to which I had been elected soon after the publication of my pictorial edition of the poet. This society comprised too many members for readings and discussions, as was originally intended, and its chance of promoting the friendly conviviality of men of congenial tastes was very soon destroyed. There was a very full attendance at a dinner at which Mr. Dickens presided. His friend, Mr. John Forster, was at his side. I sat at a side table with a remarkable-looking young man opposite to me, who I was told was the Michael Angelo Titmarsh of Fraser's Magazine. Mr. Forster rose to propose a toast. He was proceeding with that force and fluency which he always possessed, when there was some interruption by the cracking of nuts and the jingling of glasses, amongst a knot of young barristers, who were probably fastidious as to every style of eloquence but the forensic. The speaker expressed himself angrily; there were retorts of a very unparliamentary character. The Chairman in vain tried to enforce order; but "the fun," if fun it could be called, "grew fast and furious." Previous to the dinner Laman Blanchard, one of the cleverest and most amiable of men, had asked me to propose the health of the Chairman. During a short lull in the storm I was enabled to do so, saying something about throwing oil upon the waves. But it was all in vain. Mr. Dickens at length abandoned the Chair, and there was an end of the Shakspere Club. I shall have, as I proceed, to notice somewhat

but I must stop now at this unpropitious commencement of what I had hoped would have been the social amenities of a literary club.

Mr. Forster had in 1840 attained a high reputation as the author of "Statesmen of the Commonwealth." It is scarcely necessary here to point out with what mastery of original materials he has improved these biographies into works of permanent historical value. When I published my "Half Hours," he had just achieved a wide popularity as the author of "Oliver Goldsmith, a Biography." Of this charming book I thus wrote:—"Mr. Forster has lighted up the authentic narrative of a literary life with the brilliant hues of taste and imagination; and, what is a higher thing, he has told the story of the errors, the sorrows, the endurance, and the success, of one of the most delightful of our 'best authors,' with an earnest vindication of simplicity of character, and a deep sympathy with the struggles of talent, which ought to make every reader of this life more just, tolerant, and loving to his fellows." As was the case with Mr. Dickens, Mr. Forster and I became more intimately associated about the middle of the century. In his chambers in Lincoln's Inn he frequently gathered around him a small circle of men of Letters. Those who sat at his hospitable board were seldom too few or too many for general conversation.

There I first met Tennyson, and there Carlyle. Some other hand will perhaps complete my imperfect selection from the Best Authors, by a copious addition of names of recent writers, and by supplementing my biographical notices of those there given. He will have to trace the maturity of Tennyson's powers in "The Princess," in the "In Memoriam," in "Maud,"

in "The Idylls of the King," and in "Enoch Arden." What an influence the poems of Tennyson have had upon the tastes of the present age can scarcely be appreciated, except by a contrast with the fiery stimulus of the feast which Byron prepared half a century ago. There must be pauses in the excitement of these days—in which "onward," the motto of one of the railway companies, may apply to all the movements of social life—when the most busy and the most pleasure-seeking may relish a poet who, with a perfect mastery of harmonious numbers, fills the mind with tranquil images and natural thoughts, drawn out of his intimate acquaintance with the human heart. In familiar intercourse, such as that of Mr. Forster's table, Mr. Tennyson was cordial and unaffected, exhibiting, as in his writings, the simplicity of a manly character, and feeling perfectly safe from his chief aversion, the "digito monstrari," was quite at his ease. Of Mr. Carlyle's conversation I cannot call up a more accurate idea than by describing his talk as of the same character as his writings. Always forcible, often quaint and peculiar; felicitous in his occasional touches of fancy; not unfrequently sarcastic. When I edited the "Half Hours," his "French Revolution" was his chief work, and I could justly say of that book, as I might say of his "Cromwell" and his "Frederick the Great"—"In graphic power of description, whether of scenes or of characters, he has not a living equal."

Let me add to these brief recollections of some of the eminent persons with whom I have been acquainted, one who is thus noticed in the "Half Hours:"—"The Reverend Richard Jones is Professor of Political Economy at the noble establishment of the

East India Company at Haileybury, for the education of their civil officers. Mr. Jones was the successor of Malthus. His great talents, his extensive and varied knowledge, and the practical character of his understanding, eminently fit him for a teacher in this difficult science." "The noble establishment" was broken up when the entire government of India passed to the Crown. The Professors whom I there knew are dead or scattered, but seldom have so many men of enlarged minds and rare acquirements been assembled in a common hall, as I have had the honour of sitting with, in the collegiate dining-room of Haileybury. In another capacity Mr. Jones rendered good service to his country as one of the Commissioners under the Tithe Commutation Act. He was a political economist without a particle of hardness in his composition; a philosopher with all the practical wisdom of a man of the world; an administrator, acute in the discharge of his duty as the shrewdest lawyer; but throwing off the official dignity and reserve of Somerset House the instant he came into the happier ground of social intercourse. A few years ago I stumbled on his resting-place in Amwell Churchyard, close by the spring

> "Which thousands drink who never dream
> Whence flows the boon they bless."

So is it with education, for the diffusion of which, in its highest and its humblest form, the sagacious teacher of Haileybury was a zealous and a tolerant advocate.

CHAPTER III.

IN carrying out a purpose indicated in the first chapter of this volume, I proceed to notice the historical localities with which I am acquainted, generally in the order in which they present themselves in our national records. The earliest monuments of the old British stock are Abury and Stonehenge. On a summer afternoon of 1834 I diverged from the road from Bath to Marlborough, to take the little village of Abury or Avebury, on the bank of the Kennet. This was rarely visited except by antiquaries, who could piece out some lumps of stone, scattered amidst ploughed fields, into circles and avenues and altar-stones and cromlechs. Two centuries ago, it was so complete that Charles the Second, not a very imaginative person, went to look upon it. There is little now to see, for the plough has been as ruthless a destroyer of antiquity in solitary fields as the trowel has been in ancient cities. I saw Stonehenge early on a summer morning of 1842. I was then taking a pedestrian tour through the New Forest and onward, with a young clergyman, the Rev. William Scott, upon whom the awakening influences in the Church, a quarter of a century ago, had produced an enthusiastic reverence for our ecclesiastical antiquities, and necessarily a liberal curiosity with regard to the evidences of an earlier civilisation. At Salisbury we

met with my friend John Britton, himself a piece of hoar antiquity, and with him we went to Old Sarum and Stonehenge. The first impression of the traveller is that this apparently boundless plain could never have been the seat of any considerable population; that if, according to Spenser, British kings—

"entombed lie at Stonehenge by the heath,"

a desert must have witnessed their funeral obsequies. A branch railway, called the Salisbury line, now traverses the plain for some miles, passing near the little town of Amesbury, from which Stonehenge is most conveniently approached. This would of itself be evidence that there is still a population there, as was most likely the case when Druidical worshippers assembled in the "Choir of the Giants." Although the eye that ranges over Salisbury Plain may only see here and there such tokens of life as a flock and a shepherd boy, there are hamlets nestling in the hollows between the ridges of the little hills, with churches whose early dates proclaim the growth of a religion which in a few centuries left Stonehenge a ruin.

The traces of the Roman dominion in England are much more distinctly associated with historical evidence than are the monuments of the Druidical superstition. Nevertheless, how obscure is the history of some of the works in Britain of the great conquerors of the world. I went to Colchester in 1856 for the express purpose of looking at the remains of its castle, respecting which a theory had been set up that it was "built by a colony of Romans, as a temple to their deified Emperor, Claudius

Cæsar." So runs the title of a book by the Rev. H. Jenkins. I spent a pleasant day walking about Colchester, vainly endeavouring to come to some conclusion whether the site of Camulodunum was the present Colchester, or the neighbouring hill Lexden; but nevertheless I had the conviction that these spots, surrounded by waters and woods, were the scenes of some of those great conflicts which finally placed the whole of south Britain under the dominion of Rome. As I gazed upon the valley of Lexden, which was once a marsh overflowed by the Colne at every return of the tide, images would arise of the indomitable queen who speaks her injuries in the pages of Tacitus—a noble subject for verse, whether of Cowper or Tennyson—

> "Far in the East Boadicea, standing loftily charioted,
> Mad and maddening all that heard her in her fierce volubility,
> Girt by half the tribes of Britain, near the colony Cámulodúne,
> Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters o'er a wild confederacy."

With the same intelligent friend who accompanied me to Stonehenge, I have walked within the ruined walls of Silchester, and seen in an area of an hundred acres the distinct traces of lines of building which had been long before mapped out by our early topographers. I heard the dwellers in this once secluded place call Silchester The City. Few visited it from the somewhat distant towns of Reading and Basingstoke, but now the whistle of the railway engine comes very close, and the "lapwing cries away" in places still solitary. The desolation of the city of the Atrebatii was extreme, but remains of baths, of a temple, of a forum, attested its once flourishing condition. The history of its ruin is buried in the deep

night of the period when the Roman Legions had withdrawn from Britain. Richborough is within an easy distance of Ramsgate. Along the somewhat melancholy road through the vast flat which skirts the sea between the two extremities of Pegwell Bay, I walked with a friend who was well qualified to explain the former use of that long line of wall, now covered with ivy, to which we were gradually approaching. Mr. Long and I passed several hours in the examination of this remarkable ruin, some of whose walls are from twenty to thirty feet high, with their outer masonry of tiles and stones perfect in their beautiful regularity, and wonderful for their extreme thickness. We pass the postern gate and are in the interior of the Roman castle, an area of five acres—a luxuriant piece of arable land, where the antiquary is sometimes baffled in his researches by ripening corn or beans yet unshrivelled by the summer sun. Since the time of my first visit, antiquarian societies have been delving and digging, but have arrived at no very satisfactory conclusion as to the purposes of a great platform in the arable field, where the wheat and the beans refuse to grow. Again and again I have come to this solitary place, but I was never more thoroughly impressed with its associations than when, sitting here alone, I could meditate upon the vast changes that have taken place since a large arm of the sea cut off the Isle of Thanet from the mainland of Kent, and when this channel formed the readiest passage from the coast of Gaul to London. Through this channel of the Wantsum the Roman vessels from Boulogne sailed direct into the Thames, without going round the North Foreland; and the entrance to the estuary was defended

by the great castle of Richborough at the one end, and by the lesser castle of Reculver at the other. The nearest harbour of access from Gaul was Dover, but when the wind was unfavourable for a direct passage thither, Lemanis (Lymne) and Ritupæ (Richborough) afforded a shelter to early navigation in its access to the British metropolis. When the poor fisherman of Richborough steered his oyster-laden bark to Boulogne, the pharos of Dover lent its light to make his path across the channel less perilous and lonely. At Boulogne there was a corresponding lighthouse of Roman work, an octagonal tower, with twelve stages of floors, rising to the height of one hundred and twenty-five feet. This tower is said to have been the work of Caligula. It once stood a bowshot from the sea; but in the course of sixteen centuries the cliff was undermined, and it fell in 1644. The pharos of Dover has had a somewhat longer date, from the nature of its position.

A quarter of a century ago, the notion of preserving our ancient ecclesiastical edifices, much less of restoring them, had scarcely entered into the minds of any but the few who were termed enthusiasts, if they were not marked for scorn by some derisive name, whose expression was thought to indicate the honest zeal of English Protestantism. Most surprising is the change. Men, who differ materially upon points of ritual observance with those who have chiefly forced on this change, have not only ceased to oppose, but have agreed to welcome the theory that the House of God was meant to be a house of beauty. The first influence of this altered feeling was to put a stop to the general employment of whitewash and paint, for the purpose of concealing

the glowing colours and the rich carving of the periods before Puritanism took into its head that mere utility was the truest characteristic of a pure and reformed religion. Let me mention one example of this altered spirit—the church of St. Martin at Canterbury. In 1842, I thus described this church; one of the highest antiquity in the island: "Its windows belong to various periods of Gothic architecture; its external walls are patched after the barbarous fashion of modern repairs; it is deformed within by wooden boxes to separate the rich from the poor, and by ugly monumental vanities, miscalled sculpture; but the old walls are full of Roman bricks, relics, at any rate, of the older fabric where Bertha and Augustine 'used to pray.'" Three years ago, I looked again upon the lofty towers and pinnacles of the great Cathedral from the gentle elevation on which stands the church of St. Martin. I entered the church, and, whilst the western sun was streaming through the windows, could surrender myself to the thought that, from this little hill, a sound went through the land, which, in a few centuries, called up those glorious edifices which attest the piety and magnificence of our forefathers. What a change had been wrought in this primitive church since my previous visit. Without destroying the peculiar character of the various windows, they had been filled with painted glass, some designed and executed by a lady who is not a mere conventional glass-painter, but has a thorough knowledge of the history and proper application of this beautiful art. Its wooden boxes had been swept away, its monuments are not now obtrusive but subordinate to the general effect of the building. Whether this were a

British, a Roman or a Saxon church it has been restored in the purest taste, and the merit of this good work chiefly belongs to the Hon. Daniel Finch, whose cultivated mind was calculated to give an impulse to the great improvements which Canterbury now exhibits. When I first saw its Cathedral, the crypt was a receptacle for the rubbish of generations, but there was a far greater abomination within a short distance of the Cathedral Precincts. The monastery of St. Augustine was a ruin, but one, whose beautiful gateways, however dilapidated, still challenged admiration. The venerable place had been transformed into a brewery, a public-house, and a bowling-green. Under the munificent care of Mr. Beresford Hope the brewery, the ale-house, and the bowling-green have been swept away, and a College for the education of missionaries of the Church of England more worthily takes their place.

The periods of the Roman occupation and of the introduction of Christianity by Augustine belong to what we deem authentic history. At Caerleon, near Newport, in Monmouthshire, Giraldus Cambrensis saw the vestiges of Roman architectural magnificence, temples and theatres, aqueducts and hypocausts. In this little town there is now a museum of antiquities, collected and preserved with a care highly honourable to the inhabitants. But here is also the sacred ground of legendary history—the City of the Legions, where Arthur, the son of Uther Pendragon, Christian king over all Britain, held court with his Knights of the Round Table. "The Idylls of the King," brief as is their mention of "old Caerleon, upon Usk," have lent it an interest which Geoffrey of Monmouth has failed to excite, in

our contempt of what we deem his fables. A few months before I saw Caerleon, the poet of the Idylls had been there, looking about him, as all poets and historians ought to do for local illustrations. He has given us such touches of reality as a Turner would introduce into a landscape to give value to the scenes of his imagination. Take an example—

> "Now thrice that morning Guinevere had climb'd
> The giant tower, from whose high crest, they say,
> Men saw the goodly hills of Somerset,
> And white sails flying on the yellow sea;
> But not to goodly hill or yellow sea
> Look'd the fair queen, but up the vale of Usk,
> By the flat meadow."

Those who have seen Caerleon and its neighbourhood well know that this is not a random guess of an ordinary verse-maker.

Arthur's birthplace was in fairyland. His deeds, whatever foundation there may be for the legends connected with his name, are always associated with the marvellous. But there was one whose real deeds may vie with the heroic actions of the fabulous king. Alfred was born in a little town of my own Berkshire, which I felt it something like a duty to visit when I was a very young man. When I rested at the sign of the Alfred's Head in Wantage, I doubt not that I felt a glow of patriotism which I think becomes every youthful inheritor of our Saxon institutions to feel and cherish. I rose early in the morning to gaze upon the White Horse, cut out on the slope of the chalk hill in that ridge which extends from Wantage into Wiltshire. The White Horse was then much overgrown by the springing turf, but I was told that there was once an annual festival called Scouring the Horse, by which

this memorial of some great event was kept fresh and entire. A writer of the present day has revived the memory of this ancient ceremonial labour, in a little book written with the same spirit that marks the work by which he is best known, "Tom Brown's Schooldays." In the century which followed Alfred, came another great Saxon king, whose deeds are as famous in song and legend as those of the British Arthur. Athelstan is recorded to have been buried in the Abbey of Malmesbury; but the antiquaries deny that the tomb, which is there shewn, really belongs to him who "won life-long glory in battle, with edges of swords, near Brunan-burh." The people of Malmesbury look upon the recumbent effigy of Athelstan with reverence; they keep the annual feast of Athelstan with rejoicing. The hero-worship of Malmesbury is that of Athelstan. When I visited the interesting little town, I was told by a cottager that they owed their common rights to King Athelstan. The name of "The Philosopher of Malmesbury" was perhaps never heard amongst this simple and secluded people. They knew nothing of him whom Warburton called "the terror of the last age, as Tindall and Collins are of this." Every age has its peculiar terror of some thinker who has evoked the spirit of free inquiry. It is the enduring merit of Hobbes that he was the first great English writer on the science of government.

Malmesbury Abbey and Waltham Abbey are typical of the vast changes that a century and a half had produced in the fortunes of the Anglo-Saxon race. "Athelstan, king, of earls lord, of beorns bracelet-giver," was to be succeeded by weaker rulers till the Danes prevailed, and the Saxons of the

South and the Danes of the North became a mixed race. But the memory of a far more important revolution is associated with Waltham Abbey. Harold,

> "the noblest and the last
> Of Saxon kings; save one, the noblest he,—
> The last of all,"

lies buried there. "He was buried," says old Fuller, "where now the Earl of Carlisle's leaden fountain in his garden, then probably the end of the choir, or rather some eastern chapel beyond it; his tomb of plain, but rich gray marble." Since Fuller was the rector of Waltham Abbey, nearly two hundred years had elapsed when I saw his fine old church, greatly dilapidated and parts of it a ruin. It is now partially restored, as befits its sacred character and all the associations which belong to it. I went alone in 1843 from the neighbourhood of London expressly to devote a day to Battle Abbey. I slept in the little town, and betimes in the morning sought admission at the great gate, and found that the Abbey and the grounds could only be seen on one day in the week. There was nothing for me but to go again on the day prescribed, and in the mean time to content myself with a view from the Hastings road of the battle-field where Harold fell on "the day stained with the blood of the brave." I went again to the Abbey of Bataille—a disappointing place to those who seek it in a spirit even of moderate enthusiasm. The desecration of Battle Abbey, founded by William the Conqueror, began with the destruction of the monastic houses under Henry the Eighth. It was granted to Sir Anthony Browne, and

he at once set about pulling down some of the principal ecclesiastical buildings. At the beginning of the last century it was sold to the Webster family, and from that time the work of demolition and change regularly went forward. When I saw the place, the remains of the fine cloisters had been turned into a dining-room, and, to use the words of the Hastings Guide-book, "part of the site of the church is now a parterre, which in summer exhibits a fine collection of Flora's greatest beauties." This was the very church, whose high altar was described by old writers to have stood on the spot where the body of Harold was found covered with honourable wounds in the defence of his tattered standard. Flora's greatest beauties!

I have mentioned a walk through the New Forest with the intelligent friend who accompanied me to Stonehenge. We had seen Beaulieu Abbey, then in the wretched state of most of such edifices, and took our way towards Lyndhurst. We were not inclined wholly to agree with the scepticism of Voltaire as to the received opinion that the Conqueror had depopulated the New Forest for the purposes of a hunting-ground, or to accept the poetical exaggeration of Pope about "levell'd towns" and "fields ravished from industrious swains." Nevertheless the scenery of the New Forest was intimately associated in our minds with the memory of the two first Norman kings. Those few inhabitants of the interior of the forest that we met appeared to us to be unchanged in this ancient woody tract. We came, in the low ground between Beaulieu and Denny Lodge, upon two peasants gathering a miserable crop of rowan. To our questions as to the proper path, they gave a

grin, which expressed as much cunning as idiotcy, and pointed to a course which led us directly to the edge of a bog. They were low of stature, and coarse in feature. The collar of the Saxon slave was not upon their necks, but they were the descendants of the slave, through a long line who had been toiling in hopeless ignorance for seven centuries. Their mental chains have never been loosened. A mile or two farther we encountered a tall and erect man, in a peculiar costume, half peasant, half huntsman. He had the frank manners of one of nature's gentlemen, and insisted upon going with us a part of the way which we sought to Lyndhurst. His family, too, had been settled here, time out of mind. He was the descendant of the Norman huntsman, who had been trusted and encouraged, whilst the Saxon churl was feared and oppressed. One of these churls is associated with the traditions belonging to the death of the Red King. A charcoal-burner, named Purkess, is recorded to have picked up the body and conveyed it to Winchester, in the cart which he employed in his trade. In the village of Minestead we saw the name of Purkess over the door of a little shop.

> "And still, so runs our forest creed,
> Flourish the pious woodman's seed
> Even in the selfsame spot:
> One horse and cart their little store,
> Like their forefathers', neither more
> Nor less, the children's lot."*

This is better historical evidence than the stirrup hanging in the hall of the manor court of Lyndhurst,

* "The Red King," by William Stewart Rose.

which "immemorial tradition" asserts to have belonged to the saddle, from which Rufus fell when struck by the arrow of Walter Tyrrell;—perhaps even more trustworthy than the "Fair Stone" erected in 1745, which recorded that there stood the oak tree whose bark the arrow grazed.

The merest glance at the famous sites of English history would be manifestly deficient if I were to omit all mention of our Cathedrals. There is not one of these that does not present some general record of the progress of our civilization; which does not offer to the instructed eye some peculiar memorial of events and persons with which it must be ever associated. Wonderful monuments of beauty, erected in ages which we have been ignorantly accustomed to call "dark!" The scholar and the artist may spend years in the study of their architectural details; whilst he who cherishes thoughts far higher than those of antiquarian curiosity and æsthetical gratification, may surrender himself to the holy influences which they inspire, and forget all the foolish strifes engendered in past times by their altars, their tombs, and their painted windows. If the Norman soldiers ejected the earlier possessors of the soil from their castles and granges, the Norman prelates did not wholly waste the fatness of the land in luxurious gratification. Very soon after the Conquest they built Cathedrals. The Cathedral of Durham has stood during eight centuries, since the first stone was laid by one of the second William's bishops. How grandly it looks down upon the river Wear sweeping round the peninsula upon which the Cathedral and the Castle stand. How solemn is the interior with its round arched columns "looking

tranquillity." The impressions produced by the majestic simplicity of the earlier architecture might almost make us regret that at Winchester, whose date is as early as Durham, the characteristic of the Norman period has been to a great extent obliterated by the pointed arch. Durham, Salisbury, and York have left the strongest impressions upon my memory, perhaps from some accidental circumstances connected with my first view of them. Such was the grandeur of Durham from the opposite bank of the river soon after sunrise. Such the solemnity of the nave of York, where I sat alone as the setting sun was streaming through the west window. Such the magical lights and shadows of the interior of Salisbury, as, with one or two friends, I silently trod the sacred aisles by moonlight. It would be tedious were I to attempt to connect my own feelings and thoughts upon visiting them with any further mention of Canterbury, Rochester, Exeter, Ely, Gloucester, Hereford, Norwich, Chichester, or Winchester. As historical localities, these, and many of the smaller ecclesiastical edifices, have associations with the past which will render every excursion through our land interesting to the student—perhaps more so than the warder's tower and the donjon keep of the feudal castles, which tell their tale of what we call chivalry, but which after all is near akin to barbarism.

In the British Museum may be seen by all one of the most precious documents of English History—Magna Charta. It is written in Latin, and the concluding Attestation may be thus translated: "Given under our hand, in the meadow which is called Runnymede, between Windsor and Staines." That meadow entered as fully into my early associa-

tions as the regal towers of Windsor. It was with a strained enthusiasm that I wrote,

> "Dear plain! never my feet have pass'd thee by,
> At sprightly morn, high noon, or evening still,
> But thou hast fashion'd all my pliant will
> To soul-ennobling thoughts of liberty."

It was not necessary for me in those youthful da very accurately to know the exact nature of t freedom secured to me by the Great Charter of Joh nor to trace how much more remained to be wo before I, and every other plebeian, should inherit great deal more than the privileges which we wrested from the crown by a feudal aristocrac From the 15th of June in the memorable year 121 "a new soul was infused into the people of England So writes the historian of our Constitution. On long narrow strip of fertile meadow, bounded on o side by the Thames and on the other by gentle hi there was no battle fought for the partial libe there practically secured. But there was to be ma a bloody field before the whole commonalty cou claim to be partakers of the rights reluctantly co ceded to the Fitz-Walters and De Mowbrays. Ev these had again and again to battle for the po sion of every inch of the ground they had won.

From the leads of the Castle of Lewes I look u downs where flocks are peacefully nibbling the th grass. The Norman Keep and the adjacent Prio are ruins; but in the year 1264 they were a stron hold of the royal army against which Simon Montfort had marched from London, to complete t work which Runnymede had failed to secure. "Protector gentis Angliæ" had discovered t

something more than mailed knights was necessary to constitute a State. He led his soldiers to Lewes to fight not only for feudal rights, but for the interests of all freemen. He conquered. Where the railway now runs beneath the Castle walls there was a fearful slaughter. De Montfort issued writs for an assembly of knights, citizens, and burgesses. These summonses are the first in which we see the real beginnings of an English Parliament. In another year, the great earl was slain in a narrow valley near Evesham. These places are localities full of deep interest; for they have associations of long-lasting and wide-spreading political importance, and of picturesque traditions, which ballad and chronicle have preserved in the simplicity that is the enduring element of historical narrative, as well as of romantic fiction. In the story of Simon de Montfort, the democratic element combines with the heroic. The barber who went up to the top of the high tower of Evesham, and came down pale and trembling to proclaim that the banners of the royal army were near, and the Earl of Leicester who exclaimed "God have our souls all, our days are all done," are equally historical personages.

The Prince Edward, whose banner carried dismay into the ranks of the confederate army at Evesham, is now the King Edward, the conqueror of Wales. Conway is a monument of that period when an ancient nationality was destroyed, to form an integral portion of a more powerful realm. I spent an evening and a morning there, with the most delightful of companions, in June 1849. With Douglas Jerrold I penetrated the recesses of the ruined castle; climbed the towers, and lingered on the terrace

which overlooks the river; wandered round the walls, that in their enormous extent and massive character furnish a notion of the grandeur of a mediæval fortified town, that probably no other English example can furnish—a visit ever to be remembered. Had I gone here alone I might have surrendered myself to the romance of the scene; but Jerrold was a friend whose sympathy heightened every charm of the picturesque, and whose cultivated mind could fully appreciate the associations with which history and poetry have invested Conway—"the most romantic town in the kingdom."* With him there was no ennui in the longest railway journey. Perhaps even the solitary tourist might feel less of the monotony of the train, if the merest glimpse of such a place as Conway would call up images of the great Past.

More than fifty years have passed since I first saw Warwick Castle. I have visited it again and again, and at every renewed visit have derived fresh remembrances of its exquisite combination of grandeur and beauty. That castle is equalled by few monuments of the ages of chivalric splendour and feudal violence. Those grounds are surpassed by none in the artistical refinement which has created such a landscape garden as England only can shew, beneath the towers which fable has invested with silly legends, not half as interesting as historic truth. In Guy's tower sat, four centuries and a half ago, the terrible earl of Warwick—"the black dog of the wood"—to pronounce judgment of death upon Piers Gaveston, the unhappy favourite of the luxurious

* "Land we Live in." North Wales, by James Thorne.

king, who by the death of Edward I. had succeeded to a power for which he was unfitted. About a mile from Warwick is Blacklow hill, on which Gaveston was beheaded. When I first climbed the little knoll, where a stone was placed to record this judicial murder, it was an open spot by the side of the high-road. It is now thickly planted, and the inelegant monument can scarcely be reached by the passing traveller. He will easily forget his disappointment in the gratification of an hour by the side of the Avon, amidst the exquisite scenery of Guy's Cliff. Here he will be surrounded by legends which tell of the piety and tenderness of the knightly days—their "faithful loves," which seem to atone for their "fierce wars."

It did not require the nationality of a Scottish man to be moved to a glow of admiration for the heroic, as I looked upon the field of Bannockburn from the noble height of Stirling. The great victory, which sent the second Edward a fugitive from the country he came to conquer, was a passing humiliation for England; but in "the process of the suns" five centuries are but as a day. The name of Bruce is worthily invoked in Scotland as the war-cry for liberty. Long may it remain so. The time is gone by when the remembrance of Bannockburn was suggestive of border-strifes and more enduring jealousies. The Wallace and the Bruce seem to be of kin to us of the South, and to harmonize with the memories of other struggles for freedom which have been made by our common country. Even the wars of ambition which were waged on the continent by the third Edward have an interest for an intelligent Scot, although the English defeat at Bannockburn

was succeeded by the victory of Nevill's Cross. In 1855 I stood upon "the little windmill-hill" which overlooks the field of Cressy. A Scottish pedestrian came up, and we long discoursed of that great day, when the English yeomen asserted their island strength over the iron-clad knights of France, and moved not a foot though opposed by ten times their number. In that "solidarité" have Scots and English fought together in many a battle, since the days when victories were won by bow and bill.

The Border country of England and Scotland is a land of romance. The old ballad-maker and the modern novelist have clothed it with those beauties of imagination which hide the grim realities of centuries of bloodshed. Even so, Nature throws her veil over battle-fields, and we seek in vain for the traces of devastation, except where a skull is unearthed to proclaim 'it was a glorious victory." Newcastle, the chief fortified town of the English Border, has almost lost its antique aspect, in its grand railway works and its smart new streets and useful public buildings. It is a change for the better; but the lover of the picturesque would have preferred to have seen more of the rude and incommodious dwellings, such as were crowded within the walls when Newcastle was filled with the English men at arms, marching to or from the Scottish wars. I have seen a few of these around the Black Gate, but I believe they are now swept away. Even the last twenty years have produced a marked change. I presume that I should not now find a public coach from Newcastle to Edinburgh, rapid as that on which I took my seat on a bright morning of Spring, to be carried through a country made doubly interest-

ing by the minstrelsy of three centuries. The road by the Cheviots to Jedburgh may now be little travelled, for the rail by Berwick has superseded it. I chanced to sit by the side of a most intelligent fellow-traveller—a Scottish man of rank—when he said to me "This is Otterbourne." My thoughts instantly went to him who said, "I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas, that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet;" and I could identify the scenes by the picturesque narrative of Froissart as we came upon the marshy valley where the Douglas was encamped, and the Percy led up his archers, with the moon shining bright as day. This border-feud has its grand poetical aspect. The chivalry of England and Scotland fought with all courtesy at Chevy Chace; but there was nothing but sheer barbarism when the captains of Henry VIII. burnt Kelso and Jedburgh.

A few years later, the Percy and the Douglas were leagued together in a common hatred of him whom they deemed an usurper and an ingrate. The aspiring house of Lancaster was in grievous peril when Hotspur led his Northumbrian archers to the walls of Shrewsbury. I walked over Hateley field with Peter Cunningham, whose knowledge of antiquities was something higher than that of "tombstone" learning. We looked upon "the busky hill" of Shakspere, and explored the little chapel which Henry IV. built and endowed, that mass might be chanted for the souls of the men who died in the great battle, in which half of those engaged were killed or wounded. Young Harry has to fight even a more doubtful battle than that of Shrewsbury. I have followed him over the ground of Agincourt—saw

him marching with his few and exhausted men up the little hill from Blangy, to behold the French filling a very wide field, "as if with an innumerable host of locusts"—and marked how favourable was the ground for a daring attack, when the hundred and fifty thousand of his enemies were cooped up between two woods. I have seen the inclosed potato ground where the flower of the chivalry of France was buried, and have heard in a little neighbouring inn a discussion about projects for raising a monument to their memory on the fatal plain. A survey, rapid even as that which I was able to take of Agincourt, gives a precision to our notion of great battle-fields, which cannot be derived from plans and verbal explanations. Profitably has Mr. Carlyle been engaged in examining the sites of Frederick's battles! What materials they furnish for his unrivalled power of local description! The London artisan, who is desirous to understand our English history whilst he breathes a fresher air, could not better employ an Easter holiday than in walking a mile or two from the railway to Barnet. When he has stood beneath the column by the road-side beyond Barnet, which has this record: "Here was fought the famous battle between Edward the 4th and the Earl of Warwick, April the 14th, anno 1471;" let him carefully examine the ground on which the quarrel of the White and Red Roses was principally determined. He may follow the army of Edward, marching at night-fall on Easter eve up the hill of Barnet, past the ancient church, and so on to the open plain where Warwick was encamped. He would see how the ground suddenly falls to the east from the elevated plain, and how the king, having in the darkness taken up this position, escaped the

cannonade which Warwick carried on almost all the night, for "they always overshot the king's host." There is a description of the battle, by an eye-witness, and these little circumstances prove, its accuracy. On that terrible morning of April there was "a great mist," and the contending armies fought at random for three hours. When I saw this battle-field there was such a mist rising from the clay lands below Barnet. Four centuries of cultivation had not wholly changed the character of the country.

With the wars of the Roses terminated the age of castle building, and of reliance upon the fortified walls of the times of the Plantagenets. The semblance of strength was kept up in the general architectural character of great mansions, but, except under peculiar circumstances, they were incapable of offering a prolonged resistance to the assaults of an enemy provided with artillery. The physical strength of man to man, as they battled on the ramparts, or held fast the gates of the inner court, no longer decided the issue of a siege. The moat was not a secure protection. The internal comfort of a baronial dwelling ceased to be sacrificed to the necessity of lighting its chambers by loopholes, through which, if no arrow could enter, no ray of the sun could penetrate. A new era of architecture had arisen, such as may be seen in the beautiful ruin of Hurstmonceaux, in Sussex. It was "a gallant building for lodging," as Leland described Nottingham Castle, although it had seventeen octagon towers and a machicolated gateway. Its builder, in the reign of Henry VI., obtained a licence "to embattle and fortify his manor-house," yet the use of brick in all its parts is perhaps a sufficient proof that it was not fortified to resist

the attacks of an army, but rather to keep out the predatory bands of an unsettled period. The story of Lord Dacre of the South, the unhappy young man who was executed in the time of Henry VIII. for his participation in the death of a gamekeeper, who resisted the attempt of himself and some wild companions to take a deer in a neighbouring park, gives a semi-historical interest to Hurstmonceaux. The age of legal violence had succeeded that of feudal contest, for Camden says that Lord Dacre was put to death at the instigation of courtiers, who expected to get possession of his estates upon his forfeiture. Although this tragedy is the subject of a very clever drama, I was less interested in its remembrance than in the literary associations of Hurstmonceaux. Harriet Martineau and I visited this place together, and we talked more about Julius Hare, its rector, and John Sterling, its curate, than of the old histories connected with the castle, and with the flat marsh of Pevensey, of which it commands a view.

The old manor-house of Hever, in Kent, has historical associations of more recent date and of more lasting interest than those suggested by its castellated character, its lofty gatehouse with flanking towers, its portcullis, and its moat. The hall has been restored, and fitted up with some of the original family furniture of antique chairs covered with needlework. Tradition says that the unhappy lady, who has made this ancestral seat famous, herself worked some of these faded relics of early luxury. Here dwelt Anne Boleyn. A bare and rugged apartment is the long gallery or ball-room, with a rough oak floor. Here Anne was led out by her royal lover to join hands in a French brawl. Here from the

bay window which commanded the adjacent hill she waved her handkerchief when she first heard the sound of his bugle. Such are the fond tales which tradition hands down to divert our thoughts from "the little neck" and fatal block. If

"Gospel light first beam'd from Boleyn's eyes,"

there was a period of darkness before the perfect day. What England had to bear in that transition period, may be inferred when we linger amidst any of the exquisite ruins of the conventual houses, whether it be Fountains Abbey, or Tintern, or Glastonbury, or Bolton. The presence of the beautiful, in its solemn decay, must ever inspire a melancholy feeling; especially when we consider that so great a good as the Reformation could not have been accomplished without so much destruction, in which it is difficult to say whether private rapacity or public benefit were the moving principle.

England abounds with historical localities that call up the memory of the daughter of Henry the Eighth and Anne Boleyn. The presiding associations of Kenilworth are the sumptuous Leicester and Elizabeth, weak only in her vanity and her fancied affections. We muse upon the intellectual refinements of her court, and all the graces of the latter chivalry, when we sit at Penshurst under Sidney's Oak, which Ben Jonson has celebrated as—

"That taller tree, which of a nut was set,
At his great birth, where all the Muses met."

As we stand upon the Hoe at Plymouth, we think more of the high-born Howards, and the Drakes and Frobishers who had fought their way upwards from

before the mast,—all with the heartiest good-will going forth with their little pinnaces to fight the great Armada coming up the Channel—than of the vast arsenals of modern times, from which ships are turned out that would sink the largest galleon by a few broadsides. The hearty patriotism that was then animating the gentlemen and yeomen of England has been our country's safety, even to the present hour. A few years ago, a master of fiction gave me a new interest in the heroes of Plymouth and the land of Raleigh and Cavendish, for Charles Kingsley had written his "Westward Ho." With the reign of Elizabeth there are many painful as well as patriotic associations. Without yielding to the exaggerated admiration with which it has been attempted to invest the character of Mary Stuart, when I went over Hardwick Hall, and was shown "Mary Queen of Scots' Apartment," I could not but feel that her long imprisonment, with all its hopes and fears, was a heavy penalty for her errors. I did not then know that she never had an "apartment" in

"Proud Hardwick Hall
More windows than wall."

The present house was not built until after her death. The older mansion, in which she was confined, is an adjacent ruin.

When we arrive at the regnal period of the Stuarts, we may care very little to look upon the remaining walls of Theobalds, for the memory of that palace is associated with James the First, who, for England's misdeeds towards Scotland, was sent to plague us by his pedantry and his despotic tendencies. He passes away, and then comes a revival of that period of

intense national interest, when every county has some association with that struggle for civil and religious liberty, which was fought out in the middle of the seventeenth century. If the tourist desires to dwell upon the memories of the great intellects who, by the sword or the pen, made the despised of the people a real power in the state, let him go to the beech-woods of Hampden, and look upon the house where he dwelt who roused the nation by his resistance to Ship-Money; or let him spend a contemplative hour beneath the yew-trees of the churchyard of Horton, in the same county of Buckingham, where the young Milton was training himself to contend for the liberty of "Unlicensed Printing." If he would encourage a glow of admiration for the spirit of the Cavaliers, he would traverse the battle-field of Newbury, where Falkland fell, or he would go to Basing House—the house called "Loyalty," which endured siege after siege of the Parliamentarians, and surrendered not till Cromwell battered it from the higher ground, beneath which the South-Western Railway now runs. If he would connect this period with the sorrows of Charles the First, let him visit Carisbrook. If he would remember what we have escaped from since the second Charles was restored, let him visit the old building upon the banks of the Lea, which was the scene of the Rye House Plot, for a pretended participation in which Russell and Algernon Sidney were sacrificed.

In 1824, I explored Lady Place, in the village of Hurley, on the Berkshire side of the Thames. This Elizabethan mansion was built on the site of a Benedictine Monastery, and in the vaults, over which the Tudor building was erected, a modern inscription

recorded that this house of "Our Lady" was founde
at the time of the great Norman revolution, an
that "In this place, six hundred years afterward
the revolution of 1688 was begun." The mansion i
now a ruin, but the vaults and the inscriptio
remain. I read it in companionship with one of th

CHAPTER IV.

THE LAND WE LIVE IN, a monthly illustrated publication, was commenced by me in 1847. It had, to a certain extent, the same object as "Old England," of describing monuments of the past, but those notices were always in connection with the aspects of our latest civilization. In the first number I said, "We have to look upon many things which are scarcely picturesque, some wholly modern, but which have the elements of grandeur in their vastness and their moral influences. The courts and offices of government, legislation, and the administration of justice; the halls of science, art, and letters; the seats of education; the emporiums of commerce and manufactures; the havens of maritime power; the material improvements of our day viewed in connection with the moral; the manners and social characteristics of the people. All these features, and many more which it is better here to suggest than enumerate, make up the wonderful whole of 'The Land we Live in.'" The great Railway Revolution, and the facilities which steam navigation created for rapid communication, had rendered points of these islands once remote easily accessible. Thus: "the material improvements of our day viewed in connexion with the moral; the manners and social characteristics of the people," were laid more open to observation than at

any previous period. The locomotive, in many an instance, cleared the way through a "bush," where ignorance, and pauperism, and many other evils consequent upon the segregation of little communities, had been far removed from the stranger's ken, and had flourished unseen from generation to generation. There was a village lying in one of the little valleys under the range of Surrey hills called the Hog's Back, where more than half the people were in a state of hopeless idiotcy, or not far removed from it. The same cause which has been irreverently held to account for the intellectual condition of some of the royal stocks of Europe was in operation in this "Sleepy Hollow." Intermarriages were the rule of the cottagers. The Law of Settlement had here accomplished a signal triumph of the system of binding the peasantry to the soil.

There is no single rural district that at any time has come under my actual view, or the state of which I could collect from satisfactory evidence, which I could point out as an example of social evils that once prevailed, and of religious and moral improvements which have removed many of the deformities that were once as visible to the passing eye as the goître of the mountaineer. But I will endeavour to draw a very slight sketch of an English village, in which I shall combine the aspects of various villages as they existed before the accession of our present sovereign, and carry them forward to the time when an awakened spirit of public and private duty had begun to do the work of amelioration. What there is still to do may be inferred from what has been done.

As I am unable to assign a defined locality for my

village, I may be excused for giving it a name that has a generic character—I will call it Combe. A long straggling street of cottages never whitewashed; patches of gardens with broken pales and without a flower; a pound, where occasionally a stray donkey is starved to death; a church with mildewed walls; a manor-house with broken windows. The squire of the parish is an absentee; the parson is a pluralist. There is an endowed school, of which the incumbent receives the stipend, but he is always absent, and the school-house becomes the dwelling of a superannuated gardener. There was once a cottage of a better sort in the village, where an intelligent man, who had been the steward of the old squire, had obtained a living by teaching a few sons of the shopkeepers and small farmers. When the new possessor of the estate had gone abroad, no stewardship was wanted. A London speculator had taken the manor-house, with much of the adjacent land, which he made a game preserve. A sharp attorney was the agent of the absentee squire, and he duly appeared in Combe every half year to exact payment at his audit, to the utmost farthing, and on the first lawful day. Loud were the complaints of the farmers that the hares and rabbits destroyed their young wheat, and that there was a gamekeeper always ready to lay informations against them if they carried a gun without due qualification. The small cultivators, thus tyrannised over, had their own system of legal tyranny. The schoolmaster became unpopular with his class, for he had some views of his own as to the influence of the parish gravel-pit, and the plan of the cultivators to employ the labourers who drew the largest allowances and

worked the least, in preference to those who maintained themselves without the weekly dole. The schoolmaster lost most of his pupils. He had a hard-working son, who supported himself and assisted his father, by going to and from the neighbouring town as a carrier. A hare, not duly labelled with the name of the qualified person who had shot it, was found in his cart, and he was heavily fined by the Bench. In disgust he left his home to work as a navvy on a new railway The schoolmaster was saved from absolute starvation by cultivating an acre of ground belonging to his paternal cottage. His wife died; he fell sick. The cottage and the land were sold, and the schoolmaster, who had long warned the labourers to keep aloof from the slavery of the parish, could obtain no work whilst he was supposed to have any independent funds, and was himself fast approaching the state of pauperism. Date this sketch 1834. The Poor Law Amendment Act comes into operation. The Parish Workhouse is absorbed in the Union, and the schoolmaster becomes an inmate of the new building. The children are wild and disorderly. There is as yet no settled provision for Workhouse education, but the schoolmaster obtains permission to teach them something for a trifling salary. The most prejudiced of the farmer-guardians begin to perceive a change for the better, and consent that reading and writing should take the place of oakum-picking. The system of instruction in workhouses becomes general, and our schoolmaster is advanced to the dignity of an official position. Our navvy has prudence amidst dissolute fellow-labourers. He is ridiculed, but he works on and saves money. The village of Combe is not wholly redeemed from serf-

dom by the new administration of the Poor Laws. There is a good deal of distress through bad harvests, from 1836 to 1838; and distress has its necessary accompaniment of crime, when the landlord and the clergyman live only for themselves. The game-preservers are rampant. The gaols are filled with poachers, although the Secretary of State warns the magistrates against multiplying convictions for trifling offences. In Combe and other Southern villages, Young England is talking about a happy peasantry and cricket, whilst corn is at protection price, in despite of which the occupation of the Combe farmer is a ruinous one, for he has no capital and no scientific skill. The land is going out of cultivation. Farms are given up, and the rent-roll of the absentee sensibly diminishes. The timber, upon which his fathers prided themselves, is cut down. So we move on till about 1848. The squire has grown a better and a sadder man; for he has seen how political revolution is based upon a neglect of the social relations between rich and poor. He comes home. He finds a railway in progress through his village. It is the only benefit which the London speculator has conferred upon the parish, except the greater good which is the result of his own ruin in the share mania of 1846, through which he is compelled to give up playing the squire and the game preserver. The contractor is the son of his father's steward, with whom he played when they were boys together. Things are changed. The repeal of the Corn-Laws has not brought ruin. The railway brings wealthy Londoners to settle in Combe. The Church is remodelled. The living is given to the Chaplain of the Workhouse, who has worked well with the school-

master. Under his advice, the successful contractor builds a National School. Wretched cottages are pulled down, and the village labourers begin to be decently lodged. The cholera of 1849 has made the observance of sanitary laws something more than a dream of science.

Previous to the commencement of the publication of "The Land we Live in," I had availed myself of every opportunity to visit our great seats of industry, chiefly with a view to observe the progress of Education and to inquire into the general condition of the people. For several years I had contemplated a literary undertaking, the materials for which could not be wholly obtained from books. I aspired to write "The History of England during the Thirty Years' Peace, 1815—1845." The publication of this work was commenced in 1846, and a portion of it, embracing the annals of 1816-17, was written by me. The illness of my partner, and his consequent withdrawal from our business, in which he attended to the financial part, rendered it necessary for me to devote myself almost entirely to my commercial responsibilities. The "History of the Peace" was suspended for some months; and I then was fortunate in finding one of the few persons adequately qualified, not only by the power of writing agreeably, but by unwearied industry and a long course of observation upon the social affairs of the country, to produce a book of permanent value. The composition of this History of Thirty Years was resumed by Miss Martineau, and was completed by her with a success that I might have been unable to attain. The leading purpose of this book was marked out by myself in a Prospectus, which had perhaps too much of the

character of a Discourse, to be extensively read. A few sentences of extract will introduce the public realities I propose to notice in this chapter, and in subsequent Passages of the third Epoch of my Working Life. Thus I wrote in 1845:—

"In our days the course of events is essentially governed by the ruling spirit and condition of the people. Never, at any period of our history, were the energies of the Nation so wonderfully called forth, as viewed apart from the direction and influence of Government. Private Capital, chiefly in association, has accomplished enterprises of the most gigantic character—enterprises which could only have been carried forward by the Accumulations of Industry, which, for twenty years previous to the peace of Europe, we had been burying in many a bloody battle-field." . . . . . "But it is not the accumulation of Capital alone that has given the great impulse to the immense physical improvements of our times. Capital has been working with Science, and with improved economical arrangements; and these again have been left free, with some striking exceptions, to do their proper work, through the intellectual advancement of great masses of the people. Where the people are not so advanced, there is a combat still going on between elementary principles and baseless prejudices. Little as the Government has done for the Education of the People, that animating power has proceeded at a rate which the most hopeful amongst us could scarcely have dared to look for a quarter of a century ago." . . . . . "It is a necessary consequence of the Diffusion of Knowledge, that those who, for the want of a better name, are called the Working Classes,

have, during the period of which we are about to treat, been raised far higher than at any previous period in the scale of social importance. Whatever they may be destined to gain in direct political power depends upon their progress in the career which is now opened to them; but of one thing we cannot doubt, that the People, in the largest sense of the word, have become, during this period of general improvement, of far higher consideration, as an essential element of political calculations, than at any previous period. A beginning has at any rate been made in the conviction, that, without reference to their physical comforts and moral cultivation, all improvement is in a great degree valueless."

At this period a beginning had been made by legislative enactment in establishing some public provision for the intellectual advancement of the adult population of large towns. In 1845 an Act had been passed for enabling Town-councils to form *museums* in towns or boroughs where the population exceeded ten thousand. One of the most indefatigable friends of education, Mr. Ewart, obtained, in 1849, the appointment of a Committee of the House of Commons to receive evidence and to report upon the state of our public libraries, to which every one might be admitted, free of charge and without any special recommendation. Chetham's Library in Manchester was the one solitary instance of such an institution. The parochial libraries were very numerous at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The committee could trace the existence of more than a hundred and sixty such libraries, but they also found that the greater number had fallen into a state of decay—"the books lie exposed to chance and

liable to be torn by the children of the village." The report of this committee produced such a conviction that the establishment of public libraries, open and free to all comers, was a national want, that in 1850 an Act was passed for enabling Town-councils to establish public libraries as well as museums in places less populous than required by the Act of 1845. In a few years many towns availed themselves of this enactment, the inhabitants not grudging the payment of a rate of a halfpenny in the pound to accomplish this good. In too great a number of towns, however, the proposal continued to be rejected by the ignorant and selfish majority of rate-payers. The city of London, above all other places, was conspicuous in the expression of its opinion, that, after the hours of labour, its artisans and shopmen could be better employed in public houses and casinos than in the cultivation of their understandings.

The good or evil of the ability of the apprentice or the shopman to have the command of an hour or two of leisure, came to be agitated in the metropolis, and in many other industrial communities, in a struggle for the early closing of shops. In November, 1846, at the request of the Manchester and Salford Early Closing Association, I went from town to attend a Meeting in the Free Trade Hall. I had been told, in the name of "the young men of the middle classes," that it was to them a source of unfeigned regret that by the late hour system many thousands, who are engaged in carrying out the details of the commercial affairs of the country from day to day, were unable to peruse the works which had been provided, by myself and others, for the improve-

ment of the masses. This was a call which my interest as well as my duty equally inclined me to regard. It was very agreeable to me to see how heartily men of different ranks and pursuits joined in the advocacy of this measure. The chairman was Mr. Wilson, one of the foremost of the Anti-Corn Law League. One of the most earnest speakers was Lord John Manners, of whose conservatism no one could doubt. He was supported by Dr. Vaughan, who had sufficiently proclaimed his liberal principles as a historian. The necessity for the friends of education to advocate this cause continued for a few years. The Metropolitan Early Closing Association had made a marked progress in public opinion, when, on the 11th of March, 1848, the Lord Mayor presided over a great meeting at Exeter Hall, at which the Bishop of Oxford and the Earl of Harrowby were the chief speakers. I was called upon to take a part also in this meeting. Not entering upon any discussion of the socialistic doctrines of this particular period (for the meeting was held a fortnight after that revolution which established the Government Commission of Labour in Public Workshops in Paris), I said: "Without even alluding to the great questions affecting the regulation and reward of labour, I may observe that this movement cannot possibly injure the employers. On the other hand, I think it will tend to promote their interests, by cementing that union which ought always to prevail amongst the payers and the receivers of wages, and on which their mutual relations ought to be based."

Adult education, as provided for in Mechanics' Institutes and Literary and Scientific Societies, had at this time taken deep root throughout the country.

On the 8th of May, 1847, I had the honour to deliver the inaugural address of the Sheffield Athenæum. Fifteen years before this, Sheffield had established her Mechanics' Institute. Amongst my auditors was one upon whom I looked with no common reverence, James Montgomery. I could not offer in his presence such a tribute of admiration as I had long felt, but I could venture to notice his public career in Sheffield:—"Who can sum up the amount of good that an honest, tolerant, and benevolent local newspaper may accomplish within its immediate range, when we look back and recollect what mind presided over one of *your* newspapers for more than thirty years? Who can calculate the benefits that have been shed upon a past generation, and upon this generation, by your adopted son, James Montgomery—who, when he retired from that life of labour which, begun in party persecution, ended in one unanimous tribute of homage to the writer and the man, said, 'I wrote neither to suit the manners, the taste, nor the temper of the age, but I appealed to universal principles, to imperishable affections, to primary elements of our common nature, found wherever man is found in civilized society, wherever his mind has been raised above barbarian ignorance, or his passions purified from brutal selfishness.' Such was James Montgomery. Such, with the example of the editor of the Sheffield Iris before them, have been many newspaper writers, provincial and metropolitan, from his day." But the labours of Montgomery and the later journalists in Sheffield in the cause of public freedom, were powerless to put down that most hateful of private tyrannies, the oppression of workmen by workmen.

It was not for me to say much regarding this opprobrium of Sheffield, but I ventured to say this: "Let your institutions for the communication of knowledge have fair play, and if the heart-burnings and jealousies which really belong to interests ill understood on all sides do not speedily vanish, assuredly the echoes of violence,—partial, and isolated, and rare, no doubt, but still violence,—will never again make the stranger ask, Is this England?"

On the 3rd of March, 1848, I presided at the Annual Soirée of the Nottingham Mechanics' Institute. The town was at this period prosperous, and amongst its commercial men there was a liberal spirit which was not afraid of encouraging the spread of knowledge, although Feargus O'Connor was close at hand proclaiming chartism and physical force as a remedy for social evils. It was an exciting period, but no one could have conjectured from the tone and temper of this assembly of six hundred persons that there was any general disposition in the country towards political change. In point of fact there was none. The Repeal of the Corn Laws had produced its tranquillising effect upon the community, and the real leaders of the operative classes saw that many of the means of social improvement were in their own hands. My hearers heartily responded when I said:—"I consider that in selecting me to preside over your Meeting this evening, you chiefly regarded the principle which is in some degree associated with me. That principle, I venture to think, is this,—the utmost extension of knowledge,—the utmost extension of the refinements, the amenities, the brotherly love, the good feeling that proceeds from the cultivation of the liberal arts,—the extension of these

benefits to the largest number of the community." I spoke in the presence of enlightened local journalists, one of whom had taken a high position as a poet, and I was surrounded by other educated men, who would know that I did not overstate the benefits of a diffused intelligence. The Nottingham Mechanics' Institution was unusually flourishing, compared with many similar institutions. But the Committee in their Report repeated the observation which they had made the previous year—"the number of our members is not at all proportionate to the population which surrounds us." I took up this text and said:—"I think that particular remark of your committee, with reference to the population of Nottingham, is an observation that may be applicable to mechanics' institutions in general, and to all other literary and scientific societies that propose similar benefits to the great bulk of the community." I declared my opinion that mechanics' institutions originally started upon too utilitarian a principle. They started upon the principle of offering to every working-man the possible attainment of something very hard, very abstruse, and very difficult of attainment in perfection by the most educated, to be arrived at by a royal road to learning,—the attendance upon a few lectures. I went on to say, without reference to the Nottingham institution, that I thought there had been too much discouragement shewn in such institutions with regard to the social opportunities they offered of conversation, of amusement even, but above all, of instruction and entertainment in the most beautiful of arts,—music. Looking over the classification of the works that had been issued from the library of this institution, I had observed that

works of fiction had been circulated four times as much as any other description of books. Upon this point I thus expressed myself:—"Works of fiction have a direct tendency to carry forward the civilization of the country. No one can hesitate to agree with me that poetry,—associated in this catalogue with novels, under the head of works of fiction,—that high, noble, universal poetry is one of the things that has the greatest tendency to refine and elevate the mind. I am sure that, speaking to an audience to whom the name of one of the most gifted of England's sons is perfectly familiar—gifted, alas! like the possessors of many other such gifts of Heaven, to be devoted to a premature death—I am quite certain that the townsmen and townswomen of Nottingham cannot take a low estimate of poetry, when they recollect that Kirke White, the butcher's son, was one of her citizens. But it is scarcely necessary to go back half a century to remind you of the poetical associations connected with your town. When we have the honour to see in this room the accomplished translator of Dante—when I know that here also is the gifted author of Festus—when I speak of Charles Wright and Philip Bailey, I need not go very far back to say that Nottingham has pre-eminent claims to assert that it is poetical." There was a point urged by me in my address at Nottingham which recent experience, even in the humbler institutions of Working Men's Clubs, would shew to be worthy the consideration of those who do not believe that all intellectual culture depends upon books and lectures. I said that such institutions ought to possess the power of familiarising the mind with the best models of imitative art. "I think it is a step

in a very right direction when I see your hall covered with paintings. I would not have in any mechanics' institution, as I would not have in any school throughout the land, bare naked walls for the eye to rest on undelighted. I do know, and the experience of the wise teaches me to believe, that we cannot be surrounded too much with the beautiful in art; in civic halls, and wherever men congregate together for public business, or meet for social purposes; in our own houses, where prints and casts of rare sculpture are the best and least expensive luxuries; and, what is still more to the purpose, in the humblest cottage in the land. I do not think it is possible to make the people too familiar with high models of art, because in so doing a refinement is given to the understanding, and what is spiritual and grand in our nature may be developed by the presence of these beautiful creations, which, without presumption, I venture to think are emanations through the mind of man of the power of the Deity."

I trust that I may be excused for having occupied some space with personal experiences that may appear to have only a temporary and local interest. But rightly considered, the progress of these institutions, their merits and their defects, are subjects of lasting importance. As schools of instruction, or even as places of recreation, for the classes indicated by the name *Mechanics'* Institution, they must be acknowledged to have failed, when tested by the expectations which were originally formed of their influence upon the humbler members of the artisan class. About ten years ago I was talking with Dr. Hudson, the accomplished secretary of the Manchester Institute, as to the description of persons

who attended the lecture-rooms and classes there. These, he said, were chiefly clerks, shopmen, overlookers of various departments of great manufacturing establishments, but—"the fustian jackets never come here." "How do the fustian jackets employ their evenings?" I inquired. He took me to a window and pointed to a van, then passing, piled up with empty bottles. These, he told me, would be replaced in the course of the day by a similar load of full bottles, each representing the ginger-beer consumption of the neighbouring casino. The fustian jackets were there amused by listening to songs and recitations, and smoking for an hour or two. Every hour from seven o'clock to midnight there was a renewed set of these pleasure-seeking youths, but there was no intoxication, for the sale of ginger-beer and lemonade was as fifty to one compared with that of stronger liquors.

It was a very long time before the inefficiency of Mechanics' Institutes to contend with the seductions of the public-house, and of such establishments as the Manchester Casino was fully understood by those who sought to direct the real mechanic to a profitable and agreeable employment of his time after his hours of labour. Working Men's Clubs have been naturalized amongst us only during the last three or four years. But in 1848 I saw at Birmingham a real working-man's club, which combined the recreative principle with that of mutual improvement; offered a well warmed and ventilated room, supplied with books and newspapers; could furnish wholesome food at the cheapest rate; and was wholly self-supporting by the payment of one penny a week from each of its numerous members. This practical

good was not effected through the platform speeches, or even the countenance, of persons of local or national influence. There came to reside at Birmingham, at the period of the greatest depression of the stocking manufacture, an intelligent "stockinger" of the name of Brooks, who had been so steeped to the lips in poverty that he was glad to accept the means of living, as many others were, by labouring upon the public roads and bye-ways. At Birmingham his zeal and intelligence secured him friends amongst the sect to which he belonged, and he soon came to be employed in the establishment of "A Ministry to the Poor." A society, in connection with various Sunday-schools, was formed for the purpose of giving some instruction to the very poorest and most destitute children. But what I have called a real working man's club was engrafted upon this sort of ragged school. I passed some profitable and pleasant hours in the society of Mr. Brooks, who knew more of the habits of the poorer classes, even of the mendicants, than any one whom I have ever met with. He took me to his "People's Instruction Society." I there saw men diligently occupied in reading—not the seditious miscellanies, nor the demoralizing penny novels, which were then in vogue, but the best newspapers without any party distinctions, and even the higher periodicals, such as the Quarterly Review. There was a room, if I recollect rightly, for chess playing, and another where the men might smoke, but without the stimulus of alcoholic drink. A brief account of this institution was given in the second volume of "The Land we Live in," which thus concludes:—"Let those who would wish to do much with little means, see what

earnestness of purpose can accomplish. This 'Ministry to the Poor' seems to have but small funds at its command, yet it has set on foot a People's Instruction Society, Sunday-schools, a Provident Institution, Day-schools for children, Evening-schools for adults, and District-visitings to those whom small contributions in money, food, or raiment might really serve. In short it is an attempt to penetrate down to those classes which Mechanics' Institutions and Benefit Societies have never yet reached. All honour to such an attempt!"

CHAPTER V.

THE dreaded tenth of April, 1848, had passed over without harm. Not a drop of blood had been shed. A soldier had not been seen in the thoroughfares of London, but two hundred thousand of its inhabitants, from the peer to the coal-whipper, had patroled the streets, to maintain the supremacy of Law and Order. A self-styled National Convention had interrupted the usual course of industrious occupation by an attempted display of brute force, which they believed to be all-powerful, as they affirmed, "to defy the Parliament, to overawe the Government." The impostors and fanatics who constituted this Convention called themselves "The People." They had taken up the notion, so industriously propagated in the French Revolution of 1848, that the non-capitalist portion of the industrious classes were exclusively the People. There were many delusions connected with this dominant idea, not only of Chartists, but of moderate and sensible Reformers. In the endeavour to combat them by argument, I set up a Weekly Journal, "The Voice of the People."

In this undertaking I had the assistance of writers who, like myself, were not politicians in the ordinary sense of the word; who were not anti-reformers whilst they combated the abuse of the democratic principle. But we were too moderate to produce

any impression in times of great excitement; we were too honest to be abusive. Our Journal commenced on the 22d of April; it came to an end on the 13th of May. Miss Martineau, who had assisted me most ably and strenuously, wrote to me when she expected that our "Voice" would no longer be heard, "Well!—you have done what you could; and you are, at all events, free from the 'night-mare' feeling of having omitted to try what you could do, in these times."

Without dwelling too much upon the characteristics of this little publication, of which there is probably no perfect copy in existence, I may mention one or two particulars that may have something of an abiding interest, especially when they refer to the condition of society as it existed about the tenth year of our present Queen. The first Article, written by myself, is entitled "What is 'The People?'" M. Michelet had recently produced two works which had a great reputation in France, and were popular in this country by their translations,—the one, "Priests, Women, and Families," the other, "The People." In one of these he says, "Next to the conversation of men of genius and profound erudition, that of the people is certainly the most instructive." He then defines what is the People, by asking, "What is to be learned from the middle class?" adding, "as to the salons, I never left them without finding my heart shrunk and chilled." The question then arises, Are the middle classes and the wealthy classes to be no longer a part of the People? The complicated state of Society, which we call the British People, was, at this period, made up of various elements, which I will briefly notice.

The most numerous division was that of the Agricultural Labourers, amounting to about twelve hundred thousand. The farmers and others (exclusive of labourers), amounted to four hundred thousand. I asked, "Are they not all workers? Is not each class in its several capacities, promoting the prosperity of the country? There is inequality of condition, no doubt, between the one-fourth who exchange wages for labour, and the three-fourths who exchange labour for wages. There are inequalities which might be mitigated; and inequalities which no wisdom could remove, nor should attempt to remove." The second great class was that of all persons engaged in manufactures, amounting to about twelve hundred thousand. The miners, and others of the labouring class, not agricultural or manufacturing, amounted to nearly eight hundred thousand. The employers in manufacturing and mining industry were not separated in the Population Returns from the employed. One of the first acts of the Provisional Government of France, which had undertaken to guarantee employment to all citizens, was to expel from France English artisans and railroad-workers. It was the French fashion to look with the most profound contempt upon the English workman. "He excels not as man, but as a useful and powerful thing—as an excellent tool," says M. Michelet. He despises the living tool who is not diverted from his work—who employs all the resources of meat and drink to execute quickly and earnestly the task imposed upon him. "The manufacturer and the enterpriser of every kind prefer this man-machine. The Frenchman must not attempt to offer himself in competition. He is a man, and

therefore does not suit. Whilst working he occasionally stops, he thinks. He digs the soil of France; he thus stirs History itself. He knows too well, as he handles the pick-axe, that his father wielded the sword." This rant, so characteristic of most French writers, even of a man of talent like M. Michelet, led me to glance at the real character of the English worker, such as he existed in the days of steam-engines and railways, and long before. "Yes!" I wrote, "we do go straight forward; we are not dreaming; we are up to our work; when at work we work vigorously; we remember a saying in a Book which is not obsolete amongst us—'Whatever thy hand applieth itself to do, do it with thy might;' we seldom have reveries about Trafalgar or Waterloo—it is by preference that we bear in mind that our fathers did make difficult but peaceful campaigns, in the struggle to produce instead of the struggle to destroy. They were engaged in a campaign against the intractable and the hidden forces of nature,—and they subdued them, and made them their willing servants, to fill the world with the conveniences and the comforts of life."

M. Michelet, as the Apostle of War and Democracy, says, "Ancient France had three classes. New France has but two,—the People and the Bourgeoisie." The latter class in England embraces two millions and a quarter of individuals, all engaged in trade and commerce, and in the professions. The socialists wished to draw a nice distinction between the draper and the draper's assistant,—the one was a bourgeois, the other a son of the people. A great deal of this nonsense was exploded by the issue of the tenth of April. On that day I saw this bour-

geoisie—the race despised by the glory-seekers of France—firm, imperturbable, guarding their silent streets from the incendiaries that were threatened to be let loose upon them. No flourishings of the constable's staff which each man held. No hurrahs. Quiet obedience; exact discipline; every man in his place, and a place for every man. This was a demonstration that at once gave the true answer to the question, "What is The People?"

There were in England, at this period, five and twenty thousand teachers of Religion, of every denomination. I asked, Did they not belong to the People, in the broad sense of the word, although the laity and the clergy belonged to two parts of the Church? These were the reformers—the civilizers. They had their work to do at a period when they were awakened to their duties; without them the demon of avarice would have been in constant antagonism with the demon of ignorance,—cold-heartedness would have looked with contempt upon misery,—vice would have fortified itself in its resentment to pride. I said, "They live much for the people; they must live more for the people—Interpreters, teachers, friends."

In the Population Returns there were five hundred thousand persons described as of independent means; two-thirds of this class were females. The philosophers of the National Convention had their especial eye upon that portion of the class which we call gentlemen. It was time that many of the landed proprietors should have been stirred to a sense of their obligations as well as their rights. The English absentees in their terror of the turmoil that was going on in Europe, were rushing home, without

stopping to see the result of the great experiment that was in progress in France, in Italy, and in Germany. I advised that every absentee should, as soon as possible, renew the local associations amidst which he was reared. "He must return with the temper of the Prodigal: 'My country! I have sinned before God and against thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.' The fatted calf shall then be his. If his expatriation have enabled him to accumulate, he has urgent calls upon his accumulations. There is land to drain, farm-houses to repair, cottages to clean and ventilate. Depend upon it he will find all that claimed his care in wild disorder. Let him bring back no profligate habits of expenditure. The decent, unostentatious household of a gentleman is what these times require. He has examples to give of economy without parsimony,—of benevolence regulated by justice. He will find England full of a class that regards wealth as the one thing needful. If he herd with them he is lost. He will hear that a man may do what he likes with his own. Let him assure himself that, if the doctrine went on to any great practical extent, there would soon be no 'own' to do anything with. Our minds want much more reform than our institutions. If we keep the spirit sound, the institutions are safe."

Concurrent with the movements of the English Chartists was an outbreak in Ireland, which only looked formidable in the bloodthirsty declarations of some of its leaders. "The God of battles" was to be invoked; a War Directory was to be appointed. There was no exaggeration in the tone, nor even in the phrase, of a Parody which I wrote in "The Voice of the People," of the loving correspondence of Mr.

Meagher and Mr. Mitchell. I give three stanzas, which embody the practical directions, set forth by these "friends of all humankind," for the swift destruction of the Saxon mercenaries in the anticipated conflict in the streets of Dublin :—

Mea. Bold Guido Vaux devised a ready way
His long arrear of sacred debts to pay.
Mine every street ; in air the Saxons fly !
A carcase-cloud shall blacken all the sky.

Mit. Open your windows wide, angelic fair !
Arm'd be your holds with missiles new and rare :
The legions rush !—hark to their dying cries
As showers of vitriol sear their sightless eyes.

Mea. Is there an alley where some scared dragoon
May rush for safety in that blazing noon ?
Vainly the horse with broken bottles strives,—
Falls the dragoon beneath a hundred knives.

The street-fight never took place. The insurrection came to an end when Mr. Smith O'Brien led his warriors to a pitched battle with the Police. Some of the insane leaders escaped. Others were tried and convicted, but their capital sentence was commuted for transportation. In the summer of 1849, I saw the ship lying in the bay of Dublin which was to convey these erring men to Australia. Even Repealers acknowledged the justice of their punishment.

The great Irish famine of 1846 and 1847 had reached its highest point of misery two summers before that in which I looked upon some of the evidences which it had left behind of its ravages. The lives of three millions of persons were being wholly preserved in July, 1847, by administrative regulations under which they were daily fed in the

neighbourhood of their own homes. That organisation was still necessary in July, 1849. But then the green isle had again begun to put on a smiling face. Railways had attained a certain completeness, during the period when a cottier-peasantry could obtain no subsistence through their labour. The continent was still unquiet, and tourists began to think of looking for the picturesque in their own land. The Great Southern and Western Railway Company issued tickets for an excursion from London to Killarney. Douglas Jerrold proposed to me to accompany him for a fortnight's holiday, and I gladly agreed. I not only saw exquisite scenery under the most delightful circumstances of companionship; but I had a glimpse of Ireland in her transition state from a destructive social system to one that had in it some promise of good.

I had never seen Dublin. Its noble public buildings claimed my admiration, especially when I contrasted them with the low architectural pretensions of the greater number of civil edifices that had been erected since the beginning of the century, and were still in progress, in our own capital. We enjoyed the hospitalities of Dublin for a day or two, and I was glad to make the personal acquaintance of a rising barrister, who had contributed to the Penny Cyclopædia, and was known as a poet of no common order, especially by his "Forging of the Anchor." When we set out on our Killarney expedition, at six o'clock on a brilliant morning, to our surprise and pleasure, Mr. Samuel Fergusson appeared, with his wife, on the platform, with the purpose of accompanying us. How much the company of a man of letters, well versed in the history and legends of his

country, and of a most intelligent and highly cultivated lady, could add to our week's enjoyment, it is scarcely necessary to dwell upon. The journey from Dublin to Killarney was at that time accomplished in about thirteen hours. The railway went only to Mallow, a distance of a hundred and forty-five miles. Its steady progress of twenty miles an hour enabled the traveller to see the country much more advantageously than the forty miles an hour of an English express train. There was little of the picturesque about the line, and very few manifestations of prosperous industry. The small towns were mostly dilapidated, and all somnolent. The inevitable course of agricultural improvement had not yet awakened them. When we reached Mallow, the portentous beggary that we encountered at the railway station was an unusual sight which might well make an Englishman sad. Yet, if education were to do anything for the slow but sure removal of social miseries, there was evidence that something was going forward that might one day produce good fruits. Amongst the ragged boys that had just rushed out of one of the schools established under the National system, there was a manifestation of quickness that was very different from the incurious eyes and shy demeanour of English boys let loose from a village school. Half-a-dozen of them crowded round Jerrold and myself. "Plase, sir, to hear me say my lesson," says one. "Plase, sir, examine me in history," says another. Jerrold laughed heartily, and took the historical student's book. He opened it at random, and asked, "Who was the first emperor of Rome?" "Augustus." "Who was Julius Cæsar?" "His uncle." "When was Julius Cæsar assassinated?" "B.C. 44."

The boy had a sixpence, and we soon had about us another crowd of candidates for examination. The competitive system was in full vigour, "I can say it as well as he, sir." "So can I." How much of this learning remained for the guidance of these poor boys in the hard life that was before them may be matter of doubt; but even this cramming was, perhaps, a better knowledge upon which to engraft a true Irish nationality, than the traditions of the barbaric splendours of the O'Neales and Mac-Murroughs, and the glories of the Hill of Tara. Out of these lesson-books they might acquire some notion as to those who had been the real benefactors of their race by identifying Ireland with English Literature—the Swifts, the Goldsmiths, the Burkes. They might find in time that between Catholic and Protestant brotherly love was better than social hatred; that no country, and theirs especially, was ever prosperous when political agitation took the place of steady industry; that vengeance was the worst cure for real or imaginary injustice; and that where life and property were insecure, the rich and the poor were equally tending to sudden ruin or slow decay.

The forty miles which we had to travel by car were not very interesting, and there was little consolation in the refreshments provided at Millstreet, the only stage between Mallow and Killarney. Distant mountains appeared as if we should never reach them through some miles of dreary bog. At length, at a turn of the road, we are in the long street of Killarney, and are welcomed by such a clamour of mendicancy that the change to a real rickety Irish car, shaking one to pieces, is welcomed as a blessing. The driver whips, and the horse gallops, and, scarcely

able to hold on, we ask in vain for a quieter and safer transit to the Victoria Hotel. "Niver fear," says the driver. "But, I tell you, I *do* fear," says Jerrold. All remonstrance was useless, but we found comfort in a capital dinner, and excellent beds.' I have written down the thoughts of that first night at Killarney. "Sleep—the sleep of fatigue for a few hours—and then reveries and sorrowful remembrances. Faces, such as we never saw till this day, array themselves before us. Sounds, such as we have heard in the solitary wail of some one of the unhappy, but never before in the fearful clamour of a multitude, ring in our ears. There is speechless gesticulation, too, more dread to recall than any sound. We used to read of Irish beggary as a compound of misery and fun. At Mallow, and Millstreet, and Killarney, there were professional beggars in abundance; but even with them the fun was gone. There were other beggars—pallid girls, boys prematurely old, tall skeletons of men bending with inanition and not with years, mothers with unsmiling infants vainly stretching towards the fevered breast. And yet the workhouses, we were told, were open to all, and they were not filled. Many of the beings that we saw would have been in their graves but for the pound of Indian meal a day that a humane law was allowing them during the terrible season of scarcity that precedes the harvest."

The glorious scenery of Killarney is not for me here to describe. Sufficient to say that I saw it under every possible advantage of brilliant weather, and of society unusually agreeable. We climbed the hills, we explored the lakes. "The boys," as we soon learned to call our boatmen, were for awhile silent,

but we soon began to hear their stories of the O'Donaghues, whose legends are associated with every island of these lakes. Jerrold, too, brought out the native humour of one of them, who displayed no mean skill in a passage at arms with the great wit of our Clubs. A friend, who visited Killarney some ten years after us, wrote to me that Jerrold, and Jerrold's jokes, were still remembered and retailed by these good-tempered fellows. I fear that Gansey, the famous piper of Killarney,—who was old and blind when he kept us entranced by his wonderful genius, from eight o'clock till midnight,—is no longer alive to pour out strain after strain, wild and solemn, gay or pathetic, with a power that seemed like inspiration. Perhaps, too, the bugle of Spillane, the trusty guide, no longer awakens the echoes of the Torc Lake, with the tender air of "Eileen a Roon." I shall never visit these charming scenes again; perhaps, if I had the power, I should think too much of him who made them doubly delightful.

Amidst the immediate scenery of the Lakes, we saw very little of the desolation of the country. But a mile or two from Mucross there was ample testimony of the change which the famine had produced in the habits of the people. As we ascended the Mangerton mountain on sure-footed ponies, we were surrounded by troops of girls offering goat's milk and potheen. They were not dirty beggars. If their garments were ragged, they knew how to conceal their penury under their shawls, arranged with that grace which seems to belong to the Irish female before she has sunk to those lowest depths of want in which self-respect is utterly forgotten. But they all implored us to give. They clung to our stirrups

as we toiled up the mountain; some laughed and some cried; but they were universally eager for doles of money. One and all had a dream of some distant land where poverty would be unknown. Their land of promise was the United States, where some had relatives. Four pounds would secure a passage, and there they should marry and know some comfort. It was the heroism of desperation for them thus to prepare to snap asunder all the ties which bind women to their native soil, and cast themselves, without a guide or a protector, upon the great wave of fate. Thousands of Irish women thus went off by themselves, in this crisis. Two years before this time the Exodus from Ireland had commenced, which, during one decade, added two millions and a half to the population of the United States.

We quitted Killarney with the intention of exploring the wonderful scenery of Glengariff, and then returning to Dublin by Cork. The morning was bright when we had our last look of the mountains from the road to Kenmare. The town and its neighbourhood bore the marks of a beneficent proprietor the late Lord Lansdowne. There were cottages in this district which contrasted happily with the customary mud-cabins. We saw the wondrous prospect of mountains, bays, islands, and the Atlantic, as we descended the hill to Glengariff. But we saw no more of the picturesque. A rain set in. A mist hung over the whole region the next morning. We pursued our journey, shut up in a car; but there was one sight not to be passed by or forgotten. As we emerged from the pass of Camineagh we witnessed a strange procession of laden carts, followed by crowds of women shrouded in their dark blue cloaks

from the falling torrent. The carts were bringing Indian meal from Bantry, for distribution at various stations along the road. Every now and then we saw groups of women patiently waiting for the dole that was to avert starvation for another week. At a miserable public house we had to wait several hours for another conveyance and fresh horses. We had to proceed in an open car. When we reached Macroom I was really ill. The cholera was prevalent in the district through which we had passed, and my companions had their fears for me. The circumstance is associated in my remembrance with the tender friendship of Jerrold, who sate by my bed in a wretched inn, watching over me during a dreary night.

When I left home for Ireland at the end of June, 1849, the cholera had appeared in London; but there was no great apprehension of its ravages, for the weekly average of deaths from that mysterious scourge was under fifty. But in the month of July, the weekly average of fatal cases in the metropolis was nearly five hundred. In August it was above a thousand; in September, thirteen hundred. In October the epidemic had nearly disappeared. At this period throughout England and Wales, with the exception of the metropolis, there was a far more effective organization ready to meet the evil by sanitary precautions than in 1831-2. The Health of Towns Act of 1848 established a General Board of Health, for the purpose of improving the sanitary condition of towns and populous places. Many Local Boards were formed, after a searching inquiry by the Inspectors of the General Board. In 1857 two hundred and fifty places had been brought within the operation of the Health of Towns Act. London,

after much opposition from Parish Vestries, under the popular outcry against what they called centralization, was left to the enjoyment of its ancient nuisances till 1855, when the Metropolis Loçal Management Act was passed. In 1853 Cholera again attacked the population of London. I was then Publisher to the General Board of Health, of which the Commissioners were Lord Shaftesbury, Mr. Chadwick, and Dr. Southwood Smith. Looking over the various directions that had been given by public bodies and individuals for family guidance under a visitation of Cholera, I considered them too technical and elaborate to be useful to persons of imperfect education. I drew up an address, homely and practical, adapted for all ranks. My "Plain Advice" was printed as a Broadside, and was purchased and distributed throughout the country by the Local Boards of Health. The circulation of this sheet exceeded a hundred thousand. I mention this to shew what a medium exists for reaching the whole population, upon all sanitary matters affecting their own welfare and that of the general community, through the combination of Local Activity with Central Regulation. The reader of these "Passages" will probably not be displeased, if I vary this subject, not very agreeable or attractive, by the introduction of some verses of mine which were printed in "The Times" of September 24th, 1854. The signature S. T., being the final letters of my Christian and surname, was often used by me. Cholera was then again threatening to desolate the pestilence-breeding dwellings of our enormous Capital, which were generally left to their impurities till public opinion was stimulated by terror into inquiry and action.

TYPHUS AND CHOLERA.—AN ECLOGUE.

Scene.—A Lodging-house. Typhus Hovers over a Crowd of Sleepers.

Cholera (without).

Sister! Sister!

Typhus.

I am here
Doing my work for to-morrow's bier.
Nine and seven lie each in a row—
Two are gone, and two will go.

Cholera (enters).

Sister! Sister! you work too slow;
For here, where the tide has left its slime
To mix with the filth of a hundred drains,
And the hovels are rotting in damp and grime,
While the landlord is counting his daily gains,
And his slaves are groaning with chronic pains,
You linger about, till famine and gin
Must finish the work which you begin.

Typhus.

Chide me not, Sister! My work is sure.
The days are many since last you came;
But you pass'd away, and your fearful name
Was soon forgotten; but I endure.

Cholera.

Again I come.
The knell shall be toll'd,
But not for one:
Ere set of sun
Some work shall be done;
For a hurried grave shall these sleepers hold,
And the proud shall then think of the earth's poor scum.

Typhus.

No meddling spies disturb my reign,
The black ditch creeps in the populous lane;
In the mouldy cellar the infants huddle;
The alley is dank with the filthy puddle;
And the breath of heaven ne'er visits the den

Where the poorest dwell. Leave, leave me here.
I make no noise, and the well-fed men
See my victims die,
And pass quietly by,
With no vain lament, and no idle fear.

CHOLERA.

Me they shall fear.

TYPHUS.

But stay not long.
Take a few away that are wholly mine;
My pleasant places are willingly thine,
But go not the rich and the happy among.

CHOLERA.

I'll take thy leavings, with nobler prey.
Shall wretches pine beneath thy sway,
And those escape who have known the wrong?

TYPHUS.

Leave me, rash Sister, leave me here,
To fill the graves from year to year;
For our trade shall go to a swift decay
If you gather the crop from day to day.
Then the hovels will fall and houses rise;
The rich and the poor will both get wise;
And the Law will open its hoodwink'd eyes.
No more shall we ride on the tainted gale,
Where foul trades flourish and men grow pale;
Where the slaughter-house floods the slippery stones,
And the reek is heavy of boiling bones.
They will drain their streets, and build their schools,
And hunt us out.

CHOLERA.

Twice warned, the fools
Still keep us here, and they still will keep;
For the Justices wink and the Vestries sleep,
And Red Tape ties the willing hand,
And *Laissez-faire* still rules the land.

Sept 23. S. T.

CHAPTER VI.

IT had always been with me an earnest hope that when knowledge had been widely spread amongst all ranks of the community, it would be a fitting time to propose the erection of some public monument to the memory of William Caxton. The English were certainly not a people given to such demonstrations, except they were moved to this species of hero-worship by the deeds of contemporary warriors and statesmen. The spirit of nationality had erected a monument to Burns, but there was scarcely any other instance of a great poet having this tribute offered to his memory, so as to arrest the attention of the passers-by, either at the place of his birth, or in some city which he had illustrated by his abode. We had no monument to Shakspere or to Milton, to Bacon or Newton, in the Metropolis. It is only within a few years that there was any memorial whatever to our greatest interpreter of the laws of nature. It is not easy to discover what in this matter is the essential difference between the English and the Continental character. In Paris, in the great French cities, in Belgium, in Germany, in Holland, you are reminded at every step of some great poet, or painter, or musician—of the greatest of those who have built up the glory of their land in all its peaceful and civilizing processes—a glory perhaps

more enduring than that of the soldier and the politician. I thought that William Caxton was a name that would provoke no controversial opinions, and that, as he was essentially connected with the local history of Westminster, the neighbourhood of the old Almonry, where he set up his press, would be a fitting place for a statue to remind the population of London of what this skilful artificer had done for them. In my little volume of "William Caxton, a Biography," published in 1844, the following passage refers to the city in which our first printer was held to have learnt his art :—"Cologne rendered the name of Caxton a bright and venerable name—a name that even his countrymen, who are accustomed chiefly to raise columns and statues to the warlike defenders of their country, will one day honour amongst the heroes who have most successfully cultivated the arts of peace, and by high talent and patient labour have rendered it impossible that mankind should not steadily advance in the acquisition of knowledge and virtue, and in the consequent amelioration of the lot of every member of the family of mankind at some period, present or remote."

The anticipation which I thus expressed appeared to have a fair chance of being realised when the Rev. H. H. Milman, then Rector of St. Margaret's, suggested that the improvements of Westminster should be associated with a memorial to Caxton. This eminent scholar and accomplished writer, in a letter to Viscount Morpeth, said, "The character of the monument might be this—a fountain (of living water) by day, out of which should rise a tall pillar, obelisk, or cluster of Gothic pinnacles, for light by night; the diffusion of light being the fit and intel-

ligible symbol for the invention of printing." Although it might appear invidious in me to oppose any plan for the attainment of an object which I had advocated, I did not hesitate to sign my name to a letter, which I addressed to the Editor of the "Times," on the 7th of June, 1847, a few days before a public meeting was to be held for carrying out Mr. Milman's plan. I contended that we required a monument for Caxton more definite than any "symbol," however "fit and intelligible." A fountain by day, a gas-light by night, were symbols of many other blessings that had been bestowed upon mankind, to refresh and illuminate, besides the art of printing. Such symbols might equally honour the memory of the pious and liberal Abbot who encouraged Caxton to set up his press in the "Chapel" at Westminster. They might equally honour any great writer whose "living waters" and whose "light" had been rendered universal through the press. No mixed motive of uniting a public work of utility with the memory of a great benefactor should interfere with the performance of the duty to which we had been invited, by the erection of such a monument as would at once tell its own story. We did not illustrate the memory of an orator by symbols of oratory, nor of a general by trophies of war. We wanted to show posterity what manner of man he was. The Germans had erected at Mayence a monument to Guttenberg. It was a bronze statue with bas-reliefs on the pedestal—not symbolical, but descriptive of his art.

On the 12th of June a large and most influential meeting was held in the great room of the Society of Arts, "To promote the erection of a monument to

commemorate the introduction of printing into England, and in honour of William Caxton." Lord Morpeth, Chief Commissioner of the Woods and Works, presided. The Dean of Westminster moved the first resolution, which Mr. John Murray seconded. Mr. Bancroft, the Resident Minister of the United States, proposed the second resolution, which was seconded by the Rev. H. H. Milman. A Committee was formed and subscriptions were entered into amounting to several hundred pounds. But the project fell to the ground. Would it have been otherwise if a statue had been proposed instead of a symbol?

The year in which the idea of a memorial to our first Printer received such marked discouragement, afforded an opportunity for judging whether England was alive to such manifestations of a healthy sentiment, or wholly indifferent to them in the belief that they would not *pay*. The house in which Shakspere is reputed to have been born was for sale. The old tenement at Stratford-upon-Avon, in which his father had lived, had been an object of curiosity and reverence during many years. Our countrymen went out of their way to look at it even in the days before railroads. Foreigners, and Americans especially, talked about it and wrote about it. The freehold property had descended to a branch of Shakspere's family of the name of Hart. At the beginning of 1847 it was announced that it was to be sold to the highest bidder.

There was a Club, which I was instrumental in forming, called "The Museum." It was originally contemplated to be a very cheap dining club, in the neighbourhood of the British Museum, for the accommodation of the numerous daily students in the Library of that Institution. The entrance and the

annual subscription were very low. Some men of eminence in Literature and Art became members, and younger men who had a reputation to make were welcomed. The house expenses were small; the furniture and table services were not costly. It was a true compliment to our Club when it got the name of "The Pewter Garrick." Yet, though the arrangements were upon this humble scale, I believe there was as much enjoyment in "The Museum" as in "The Athenæum." There was certainly more ease; and probably much more of the "full flow of London talk" about books and men than in the carpeted saloons of Pall Mall. At little social meetings I have heard as much wit in one evening as would furnish the stock in trade of a fashionable diner-out for a dozen exhibitions. But of this Club came the notion of setting on foot a subscription to buy the Shakspere House. It was determined to call a public meeting at the Thatched House Tavern. There were no titled names paraded to draw together a company; yet there was a full attendance. A Committee was nominated, chiefly of Men of Letters. One nobleman only, Lord Morpeth, was included in this nomination. He was not a mere ornamental adjunct to a working Committee, but laboured as strenuously as any of us to accomplish the object for which we were associated. We raised a large subscription though it was somewhat short of the three thousand pounds for which we obtained the property. The deficiency was subsequently made up, in some measure, by a performance at Covent Garden Theatre, in which all the great actors and actresses of the time took scenes from various plays of Shakspere; and partly by the proceeds

of gratuitous Readings by Mr. Macready, at the time when he was leaving the stage. The theatrical display of the 7th of December was exceedingly effective, with one exception. I had been requested by the Committee to write a Prologue, which was to be spoken by Mr. Phelps. He had not uttered three lines, when a row commenced in the back benches of the pit, which had been curtailed of its proper dimensions to form stalls. Three times the actor essayed to proceed, but the clamour of the struggling crowd grew louder and louder; till at length he rushed off the stage, and went to his own theatre of Sadler's Wells, to find a more tranquil audience. I had the satisfaction of seeing my unhappy Prologue the next morning in "The Times." Lest my readers should throw down my book, as Mr. Phelps threw up my poem, I will only inflict upon them sixteen lines:

"The Macedonian stands within the gates
Of the devoted Thebes. Relentless hates
Ask to be loos'd in bloodshed and in fire:
Spare not—the conqueror cries:—yet stay! the lyre
Of glorious Pindarus in Thebes was strung—
Search for his House these fated piles among;
Perish the city, down with every tower,
But lift no spear against the Muses' bower.

"The victor Time has stood on Avon's side
To doom the fall of many a home of pride;
Rapine o'er Evesham's gilded fane has strode,
And gorgeous Kenilworth has paved the road:
But Time has gently laid his withering hands
On one frail House—the House of Shakspere stands;
Centuries are gone—fallen 'the cloud-capp'd tow'rs;'
But Shakspere's home, his boyhood's home, is ours."

When the Shakspere House had been purchased by the London Committee, and when the adjoining

tenements had also been purchased by a separate subscription at Stratford, the necessity was apparent of having the house taken care of, and shown to visitors by some one, who, at the least, would not cast an air of ridicule over the whole thing, as was the case with the ignorant women who had made a property of it by the receipt of shillings and sixpences. Mr. Charles Dickens organized a series of Amateur Performances "in aid of the Fund for the endowment of a Perpetual Curatorship of Shakspere's House, to be always held by some one distinguished in Literature, and more especially in Dramatic Literature; the profits of which, it is the intention of the Shakspere House Committee to keep entirely separate from the fund now raising for the purchase of the House." The announcement set forth that the Directors of General Arrangements would be Mr. John Payne Collier, Mr. Charles Knight, and Mr. Peter Cunningham,—the Stage-Manager, Mr. Charles Dickens. On the 15th of May, 1848, was to be presented at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, the Comedy of "The Merry Wives of Windsor" and the Farce of "Animal Magnetism." The *cast* of the Comedy may have, after the lapse of sixteen years, a far higher interest than that of a common amateur performance.

Sir John Falstaff . . .	Mr. Mark Lemon.
Fenton	Mr. Charles Romer.
Shallow	Mr. Charles Dickens.
Slender	Mr. John Leech.
Mr. Ford	Mr. John Forster.
Mr. Page	Mr. Frank Stone.
Sir Hugh Evans . . .	Mr. G. H. Lewes.
Dr. Caius	Mr. Dudley Costello.
Host of the Garter Inn . .	Mr. Frederick Dickens.
Bardolph	Mr. Cole.

Pistol	Mr. George Cruikshank.
Nym.	Mr. Augustus Dickens.
Robin	Miss Robins.
Simple	Mr. Augustus Egg.
Rugby	Mr. Eaton.
Mrs. Ford	Miss Fortescue.
Mrs. Page	Miss Kenworthy.
Mrs. Anne Page . . .	Miss Anne Romer.
Mrs. Quickly.	Mrs. Cowden Clarke.

In the July of this year the same performances, with a few variations of cast, were repeated at Edinburgh, and at Glasgow. Mr. Peter Cunningham and I accompanied the troop, something in the character of the Dutch Commissioners who went with Marlborough's army, but not for the purpose of fighting, or rendering any effectual assistance to the fighters. But we did not, like those troublesome burghers in long cloaks, interfere in any degree with the regular course of our campaign. We were invited to go, and we went solely for our own gratification. It was, indeed, a joyous time, and I spent four or five days amidst excitements which were quite novel to me. The receipts of the London and Provincial Performances were considerable. There were many difficulties in the way of appointing a Curator of the Shakspere House. Lord Morpeth had pledged himself, in his official character, that if the house were vested in the Crown it should be preserved with religious care, as the property of the British people, and should be maintained as the honoured residence of some dramatic author, who should be salaried by the Government. This project, defeated by the retirement of Lord Morpeth from office, would have been in many respects desirable; for I may venture to inquire if there is any efficient Trust for this

property, and whether the Act of Mortmain does not interfere with any such Trust being created? It was conveyed in fee by the vendors in 1847 to two gentlemen. I have often asked in London and in Stratford who are the legal owners, and have never been able to obtain a satisfactory answer. Mr. Dickens and his friends wisely determined, therefore, to do something efficient with the proceeds of their labours, and they bought an annuity for one of the most able of our dramatic authors, Mr. Sheridan Knowles.

After the theatrical trip to Scotland my intimacy with Mr. Dickens became of a closer character. Yet we rarely met in society. At the beginning of 1850 he wrote to me "I never see you, and begin to think we must have another Play, say in Cornwall, expressly to bring us together." We were soon to be brought together in a manner that I shall always look back upon with no common pleasure. The "Household Words" was announced for publication on the 30th of March. Mr. Dickens, a week or two before the first number appeared, sent me a brief but most cordial invitation to become a contributor: "If you will write in my paper you will give me the utmost gratification, and be more welcome than the flowers in May." I could command sufficient leisure from my business, which was then less engrossing than a few years before, willingly to lend my aid to a publication so full of promise—so sure to become a "Fountain," of which all would rejoice to drink, whilst the "Sewer" would be avoided even by the most uninstructed. Such were the names by which, in my pamphlet on the Paper Duty, just then published, I had marked the distinction between a wholesome and a noxious cheap Weekly Sheet. I

occasionally contributed some articles to the two first volumes of this highly popular Miscellany.* In 1850 Mr. Dickens and I were much together, especially at Broadstairs. It was in that quiet little watering-place that he made me acquainted with the Rev. James White. That acquaintance soon ripened into a warm friendship. Once established in confidential intercourse with this most amiable man, it was impossible for me not to love him. His heart was as warm as his intellect was clear. His conversational powers were of no common order, for to the richness of a cultivated mind he brought a natural vein of humour which in his talk, as occasionally in his writings, called forth that merriment which is most enjoyable because it is universal in its glancing satire. And yet his spirits, sometimes so buoyant, were occasionally overshadowed by a deep melancholy. Sorrow, of no common amount, in the loss of children, and in his fears for others of his family, had touched him nearly. He had a solace in the partner of his cares,—a blessing most needed by him under the depression which perhaps is the heaviest burden men of genius occasionally bear. Employment was his other great alleviator of trouble. He was the author of several well-known historical dramas; and in latter years he was a diligent writer of elementary historical works. "Landmarks of the History of England," and "Landmarks of the History of Greece" have obtained a deserved reputation; their want of details is compensated by their breadth of view. The same power of generalization is displayed in his "Eighteen Christian Centuries." In

* Most of these are reprinted in my Volume, "Once upon a Time."

his hospitable home at Bonchurch I always found a welcome when I was disposed for a few days' relaxation. I enjoyed his friendship for twelve years—and then he, a comparatively young man, was called to his reward. His memory is held in reverence by all amongst whom he dwelt. He was surrounded by admiring friends, who felt that he was the great charm of their social circle. As President of the Ventnor Literary Institute he gave a stimulus, as only such a man can give, to the intellectual pursuits of a mixed population. His "Landmarks" of our own history were originally delivered as lectures to his neighbours. They are models of what such discourses ought to be—simple in their style; abounding in knowledge without pedantry; liberal and patriotic.

At the end of March, 1851, I received a note from Mr Dickens which summoned me to a new vocation: "Jerrold tells me that you will do Hodge, the Country Servant, in Bulwer's comedy." This comedy, "Not so bad as we seem," was to attain a wide notoriety in connexion with the performances of "The Amateur Company of the Guild of Literature and Art." The notion of forming a Guild of this character had for its object "To encourage Life Assurance and other Provident habits among Authors and Artists; to render such assistance to both as shall never compromise their independence; and to found a new Institution where honourable rest from arduous labour shall still be associated with the discharge of congenial duties." The plan was matured at Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton's seat of Knebworth, in Hertfordshire, in November 1850, when there was an amateur performance of "Every Man in his Humour," under the management of Mr. Dickens. I was favoured

with an invitation for one of three evenings. At the supper of the Amateurs after the last performance, it was announced that our host had signified his intention of presenting a piece of land, being a part of his estate, upon which might be erected commodious dwellings for the Members of the New Institution who should be elected to this "honourable rest from arduous labour." Performances of a more public character than those of Knebworth were to be undertaken. Mr. Dickens, with his usual energy, set about their organization. The new comedy was written; the characters were cast. For myself, I should have been well contented with "Hodge, the Country Servant." But my professional tastes, and consequent histrionic capacity for playing the part of a scheming publisher of the days of Sir Robert Walpole, were considered; and I had to rehearse the part of "Mr. Jacob Tonson, a Bookseller." "Left-legged Jacob," I fear, had a halting representative.

The Amateur Company of the Guild, as originally constituted, was as follows;—taken in the order in which they appear in the announcements of the performances: Frank Stone; Dudley Costello; Charles Dickens; Douglas Jerrold; John Forster; Mark Lemon; F. W. Topham; Peter Cunningham; Westland Marston; R. H. Horne; Charles Knight; Wilkie Collins; John Tenniel; Robert Bell; Augustus Egg. The ladies were professional.

All the tedious process of rehearsals at Miss Kelly's theatre were over. The dresses were made and fitted. A little moveable theatre was constructed—a perfect miniature stage, with every requisite of the *property-man*. The scenery was of no common character. Two Royal Academicians, Mr. Stanfield and Mr.

Roberts, had produced little marvels of scenic art. Mr. Grieve, and four others of the most eminent professors of this really high branch of pictorial effect, had painted interiors and street representations which were perfect illustrations of the story. Everything was ready for presenting "Not so bad as we seem" upon a site to which the car of Thespis had never before travelled. The Duke of Devonshire gave up his mansion in Piccadilly to our use. The moveable theatre was put up in the great drawing-room. We had his library for our green-room. The Duke took a warm interest in all our proceedings, and it is scarcely necessary to say that his hospitality was most liberal. A dress-rehearsal took place on the 6th of May, at which our families, and many literary men and artists were present, as well as immediate friends of our host. At the first performance at Devonshire House, on the 14th of May, the Queen was present. The actors and the audience were so close together that as Mr. Jacob Tonson sat in Wills' Coffee-house he could have touched with his clouded cane the Duke of Wellington, who was of her Majesty's suite.

The representations at Devonshire House were followed by others of a less courtly character at the Hanover Square Rooms. The town was excessively full, for it was the time of the Great Exhibition. We were getting rather weary of our monotonous duties on the hot nights of June and July, when they came to a close. The success of these performances was as much due to the remarkable powers of organization possessed by Mr. Dickens, as to the merits of the Comedy, and the desire of the actors to acquit themselves creditably in their several cha-

racters. Though it must be confessed the dialogue of the play was occasionally heavy, and the incidents not very striking, the applause of the audience was quite sufficient to have satisfied even the professional player. There was a wonderful farce, however, "Mr. Nightingale's Diary," written by Mr. Dickens and Mr. Mark Lemon, in which Mr. Gabblewig (Dickens) personated five or six different characters, changing his dress, and altering his features, his voice, and his gait with an effect that was worthy of the elder or the younger Mathews. I have mentioned Mr. Dickens's singular ability as a manager. It is perhaps not so remarkable a quality as the presence of mind, and power of will, which he displayed at one of the performances at Hanover Square. A part of the scenic drapery of the stage caught fire. The audience jumped up, and were rushing to the one door of egress, to encounter even a greater danger than that of a burning stage. Mr. Dickens, who was acting at the time, immediately rushed to the footlights, and his voice of command made itself heard through the whole building—"Sit still, every one of you!" The five hundred terrified spectators *did* sit still. The self-possessed actor went on with his part, as if nothing had happened, leaving to others to put out the blaze. It was quickly put out; and we all felt, when we looked upon the resumed tranquillity of those who might have been treading each other under foot, what an invaluable possession was decision of character.

The success in London of the Amateur Performances of the Guild led to the determination of the Company to venture upon some experiments with provincial audiences. Our theatre was so constructed

as to be packed and placed upon a railway-carriage. Our first excursion was to Bath and to Bristol, in November. The stage was put up in the Assembly-rooms at Bath. We were at our post, ready to dress, when our perruquier, with a look of horror, announced that the wigs had not arrived. The hair-dressers' shops were ransacked in vain; the time was long passed when Bath could produce a stock of perukes such as were the glory of the days of Nash, much less of the first years of the Brunswick dynasty. It was a question whether our Duke of Middlesex, our Earl of Loftus, and our Lord Wilmot, could be content with the scratch-wigs of our own degenerate days, or appear in their gorgeous array of velvet and lace with their own cropped hair. We really dreaded for our poor perruquier some such catastrophe as happened to the cook of Louis the Fourteenth, when the fish came too late for dinner. But the fates were propitious. The wigs arrived at the last moment. The Bath audience, too genteel to manifest emotion, gave us very faint, if any, applause. We looked forward to the time when we should receive our deserts at the hands of the sturdier critics and the more youthful and sympathising fair of the North. We were compensated, however, by the audience in the Assembly-rooms at Clifton, where Bristol commerce and its suburban gentility vied with each other in making us welcome. In the February of the next year the Amateur Company had two performances at Manchester, and two at Liverpool. We felt it necessary on several occasions to decline the private and public hospitalities that were offered to us; but at Liverpool we considered ourselves bound to acccept the invitation of the Mayor to dine at the Mansion-house. Mr.

Littledale, who was then Chief Magistrate, was an object of public admiration from the noble effort he had a little before made to save the crew of a sinking vessel. He was rewarded in being the instrument of preserving many lives as he was cruising in his yacht. On the occasion of our entertainment his brother members of the Yacht Club were also invited. I have not been much of a diner at the civic banquets of London; perhaps I may be somewhat fastidious, or speaking from imperfect knowledge, when I say that the hospitalities of the City appeared to me greatly inferior to the refinement of Liverpool, and the Mansion-house of London a tawdry affair compared with the elegant suite of rooms in which every stranger of note who comes to the great Port of the Mersey is sure to be welcomed at the weekly dinner, which is not chiefly confined to aldermen and common-councilmen.

We visited Shrewsbury and Birmingham in the summer of 1852, before setting out upon our principal circuit at the end of August and beginning of September. We first went to Nottingham, and then to Derby. At Newcastle, the room in which we performed was small and inconvenient, and the consequent crush somewhat alarming. But at Sunderland, where the Guild was to perform on the 28th of August, there was an alarm of a more serious character. We had arrived there from Newcastle in the middle of the day, and found that Dickens, who had started early to walk, was busied at the Musical Hall making the necessary arrangements. It had been recently erected; had never been used; and was in some parts not completely finished. Our manager was a long while absent, but at length he

came to the Inn, looking jaded and anxious, and, what was very unusual, depressed in spirits. He called me aside and told me that there was a notion amongst some people in the town that the place would fall down. The recollection of the catastrophe in the Brunswick Theatre was full upon his mind; but he had done all that man could do, short of stopping the performances. He had gone over the building with a surveyor, who had assured him that all was safe. Several of us went with him early to the Hall, examined under his advice all the modes of getting out connected with the stage, and at the same time were urged not to talk about our fears so that the ladies might be alarmed. The place was crowded. The performances went on. Our manager struggled with his nerves, and kept them under; but I saw upon him all the night the effect of the apprehension. There were at least a thousand people present, and when they huzzaed and stamped their feet till the roof shook again, we turned to each other, and heartily wished the night was over. Between the fear and the excitement of the popular demonstration, everybody had a racking headache.

From Sunderland we went to Sheffield. This was the last performance of "Not so bad as we seem." At Manchester and Liverpool, where the Comedy had been acted in the early part of the year, other pieces were to be substituted. Writing home, I said, "On the 1st of September I made my last appearance on any stage. It is melancholy to think upon." At Manchester a banquet was given in the Athenæum to the Members of the Guild. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton was of the guests, as President of the Guild. Few men have greater power of treating common-

place topics with an effect which seems as original as it is graceful. Mr. Dickens has acquired a reputation for after-dinner speeches, which renders his advocacy all-powerful for objects of public benevolence. Coming after these masters I was somewhat abashed at having to propose the Manchester Free Library. Two days after the banquet this Library was formally opened, and some of us had again to give utterance to our own sentiments, instead of repeating the words set down for us. But in connection with the higher interests of Literature and Art, for which the Guild was established, there could be no words more effective than those of the Comedy in which Lord Wilmot, the man of fashion, addresses David Fallen, the starving author, "Oh, trust me, the day shall come, when men will feel that it is not charity we owe to the ENNOBLERS OF LIFE—it is TRIBUTE! When their order shall rise with the civilisation it called into being; and, amidst an assembly of all that is lofty and fair in the chivalry of birth, it shall refer its claim to just rank among freemen, to some Queen whom even a Milton might have sung, and even a Hampden have died for!"

I have not forgotten that our business arrangements, and financial affairs, owed much of their regularity to the unceasing care of Mr. W. H. Wills. A large sum was collected, and invested. An Act of Parliament was obtained, for the constitution of the Guild in a corporate capacity, so as to hold property. From the wording of the Act, seven years had to elapse before any steps could be taken to carry out our plans. At the present time, three houses, commodious, well-finished, are being erected upon Sir E. Bulwer Lytton's land, near Stevenage.

CHAPTER VII.

IN common with thousands of others, I look back upon the Great Industrial Exhibition of 1851, and upon all its associations, with pleasurable feelings that never before or since have been called up, in an equal degree, by any public display of national power and wealth. The unique character of the building, which, after a long period of suspense and doubt, was finally agreed upon for the purposes of the Exhibition; its magnitude; its novelty of form; its application of glass and iron as the two principal materials of the structure, combined to produce an effect which was beyond the reach of regular architecture. When Sir Robert Peel abolished the duties upon glass, he could scarcely have contemplated that the rapid development of our national industry, under that system of Free Trade and fiscal reform to which he had pointed the way, would have been celebrated in a palace of untaxed glass, to be filled with domestic manufactures no longer vexed by excise; and with foreign products no longer denied to us by laws of protection, which were little more than premiums to the smuggler. The crystal fabric of Hyde Park was a true symbol of what *had been accomplished*, and what *was to be accomplished*, by wise legislation. Two great elm-trees that were covered in by the roof seemed as it were to interpret the wishes of Industry, and say,

"Let us alone. Let us grow." The conception of this glass palace was really a grand one in its vastness and its simplicity. Sir Charles Fox, the contractor for the building, told me that it was altogether so different in its dimensions from any building he had ever seen or heard of, that he could not get the idea of it, as a reality, into his head, until one moonlight night walking up Portland Place, it suddenly occurred to him that from one end to the other, and from one side to the other, the area of this fine street was as near as possible that of the ground which he was to cover with his work.

To enter into any of the statistical details of this memorable Exhibition is not within the purpose of these "Passages." I was not a Juror, and, although I was frequently there, from May to October, and had carefully watched the progress of the building for three or four months before, I had no actual duties to perform beyond that of careful observation. This was essential, for, as was the case with other publishers, I was availing myself of the impulse given to this species of knowledge, to issue several works in illustration of the Industry of all Nations. In my case, and I believe in that of others, success was not proportioned to the expenditure upon literature and art involved in the production of such books. The six million persons who went to see the Exhibition were too much occupied with the immense variety of objects exciting their curiosity to have any time for reading about them. No doubt many thoughtful artisans and commercial men, of all countries, were here for improvement or for profit; but by far the greater number of visitors came for their enjoyment. The opportunities for the pleasure-seekers were such

as had never before been within their reach. Explanatory lectures were given in some of the side rooms of the main building, but the attendance was very small. To lounge for hours in this vast hall, surrounded by treasures of greater magnificence than the barbaric pearl and gold which the gorgeous East showered on her kings,—to turn aside from the most exquisite productions of handicraft to look upon the grander wonders of machinery in motion,—to seek for familiar faces amongst the crowd of visitors, whose daily average was forty-two thousand,—to assist in consuming two million buns and cakes, and in drinking a million bottles of lemonade, soda-water, and ginger-beer,—such might appear to have been the chief pursuits of the gazers who came and who went. But even to the most incurious and the most apathetic, there must have been some enlargement of the mind when they saw the various fabrics of their own country arranged under an intelligible system of classification, and the manifold productions of other lands placed together in the order of their respective countries. It was the first Industrial Exhibition upon a large scale that had been attempted. It was the first truly International Exhibition that had excited the emulation of foreigners. But it had scarcely been expected that the Governments of almost every State should have appointed Commissioners to superintend the operations of their subjects; that, from almost every country of Europe, and the various States of the North American Union; from the Republics of South America; from each of our own Colonies; from India, Egypt, Persia, and even from the Society Islands, there should have been got together the most useful and the most costly, the rarest and the most

common objects of Industrial and Productive Art. A comprehensive mind, that of Prince Albert, which had matured the idea of this great undertaking, regulated the labours of the Commissioners. There was a consequent harmony and completeness in the organization which has not been surpassed in any subsequent Exhibition in foreign countries, and was certainly not so fully attained in a later Exhibition in our own country, when the presiding genius of that of 1851 was lost. The official publications, especially the Illustrated Catalogue, which were undertaken by private enterprise, are worthy records of the successful carrying-out of a great design. The Reports of the Juries contain a great body of valuable information, which contributed to banish from every branch of trade and manufacture the pretence to be a mystery. When I undertook in the Penny Magazine to publish descriptions of the factories of Great Britain, there were a few manufacturers who, in the belief that they could retain possession of the markets of the world by exclusiveness, refused to my reporter a sight even of their commonest operations. Ten years were sufficient to put an end to all these absurd pretences, individual or national, which had for their object to uphold monopolies by secresy. In 1851 we were not afraid to show all the world, and to tell all the world, how we worked. If foreigners learned something from us, we learned as much from foreigners, there can be no doubt. For, although our own advance had been great in all manufactures in which taste was concerned—and much of this advance was to be attributed to Schools of Design,—our progress was much greater after we had this opportunity of comparing our porcelain, our silks, our printed calicoes

and muslins, our upholstery, with those of France and other nations, where elegance imparts a new value to utility. I have said that Prince Albert matured the idea of the Exhibition. In 1845, a Committee of Members of the Society of Arts had been formed to carry out an Exhibition of National Industry. Those who remembered what that Society was in the days of George IV. might have been surprised that any successful attempt had been made to awaken it from its long torpor, or to imbue it with a higher spirit than that which had marked its transactions in the first decades of the present century. There was a handsome building in John Street, Adelphi, which had been erected in 1772, and which possessed a real interest from the paintings of James Barry in the Council-room. Persons denominated "respectable" were admitted to see these pictures, and to inspect the Model-room of the Society, where a number of very obsolete inventions were exhibited in glass-cases. The Council met every Wednesday, to decide upon trifles which really occupied no portion of public consideration, in an age fruitful of great discoveries in science, and great improvements in arts and manufactures. There was a very clever and energetic young man of the Record Office, Mr. Henry Cole, for whom I published a little Manual on Colour. Without any pretensions to be an artist, he very clearly saw how much the manufactures of this country might be improved by a diffused knowledge of form and decoration. He took a great interest in the Society of Arts; and persuaded some manufacturers of porcelain and earthenware to send specimens of useful articles of superior design, calculated to form a little Exhibition in the Rooms of the Society. This

attempt was a successful one, and naturally induced a higher ambition. It was a fortunate circumstance for the Society of Arts when Prince Albert consented to become its President. Out of that presidency grew the Great Exhibition of 1851, and many other plans connected with Industrial Art, which made the Society a real power, instead of a lifeless memorial of misdirected efforts. It became identified with the principle that the consumers are more to be regarded than the producers—the principle of Free Trade. Its early efforts during the war, and some time after, were directed to the vain endeavour to produce a worse article and a dearer article at home than could be obtained by exchange with the foreigner. If I am not mistaken, it was constantly offering a premium for the cultivation of rhubarb in England, so that something like the valuable root of Turkey might be raised in our own climate with prodigious pains, to be quite unworthy of finding a place in the pharmacopœia. The attempt, however, might have had some indirect good in leading to the cultivation of rhubarb, not for physic but for food.

The Society of Arts being once in prosperous activity, applied itself to effect an organization of Mechanics' Institutes throughout the kingdom. The presence at an Annual Meeting, followed by a dinner, of delegates from such societies afforded me the opportunity, on several occasions, of coming into contact with men well acquainted with the state of adult education in their several districts. In 1853–4, the Crystal Palace at Sydenham was in course of erection. The fabric in Hyde Park had been sold to an engineer, who, with one or two speculative friends, saw the feasibility of rearing a counterpart, with

improvements, of the first palace of glass, and of there establishing a permanent Exhibition of Art, if not of Manufactures, and of surrounding the building with grounds fitted for all out-door enjoyment. A Company was formed; directors were appointed; and a noble site was at last obtained, though somewhat too far from London. The building was nearly completed, and many models of the finest objects of sculpture in all countries were being collected, when I went thither with many delegates of Provincial Societies to the Society of Arts. I mention this unimportant event because it brought me acquainted with Mr. Samuel Phillips, who had turned aside from the accustomed course of his distinguished literary career to take an active part in the formation of the Crystal Palace Company, and to render the most valuable services as its Secretary. He was a man of a singularly fertile and suggestive mind; unsparing of labour, though suffering under the disease which terminated in his premature death. I have passed some improving hours with him in this building, and have seen with admiration how readily a man of versatile powers could turn from essay-writing and reviewing—from exposing passing follies, and satirising dull authors, to obtain such a practical knowledge of ancient and modern art as would enable him to fill the numerous courts of the Palace at Sydenham with the great works of every age and every country, invaluable as a collection, although only plaster copies.

Towards the end of May, 1855, Dr. Lyon Playfair called upon me to signify the wish of the authorities connected with the Board of Trade that I would act as a Juror in the Paris Universal Exhibition. The

opening of the Exhibition had been postponed from the 1st of May to the 15th; but it was well understood that another month must elapse before the articles exhibited would be in sufficient order for the inspection of the Jurors. Having accepted the office, with the understanding that my duties would probably not detain me in Paris more than a month, I arrived there with my wife and daughters on the 23rd of June. On the 25th, I attended a Meeting of English Jurors in the rooms appointed for their use. It was proposed that they should often meet here, and confer together upon the general character of the Exhibition and the more remarkable specimens of foreign industry which it contained. A day in each week was appointed for the meetings of our little Industrial Parliament. The statements and discussions were really interesting, whether the Duke of Hamilton spoke of Furniture, Mr. Evelyn Denison of Agricultural Instruments, or Professor Willis of Machinery. Several of the communications thus made were embodied in "Notes of some remarkable objects exhibited in the French, Foreign, and British Colonial Departments." These notes were furnished to the Board of Trade, and Part I. was published "for the information of Merchants, Manufacturers, Workmen, &c." But the actual business of the Jurors in making their awards was too onerous and pressing to allow of this generalization. In 1856, "Reports on the Paris Universal Exhibition," in three parts, were presented to Parliament. One of these was written by me, as a Juror for Class XXVI. —Drawing and Modelling, Letter-Press and Copper-Plate Printing, and Photography.

Great as may be the French power of organization

in military affairs, it certainly was not displayed to much advantage in the arrangements for this Exhibition. When I entered the building at 9 o'clock in the morning, on the 26th of June, and had to find my way to the temporary erections in which there were separate rooms for the Meetings of Jurors, I saw something like order in the comparatively small Palais d'Industrie, but beyond its walls, in the space leading to the Annexe, all seemed in hopeless confusion. Carpenters were at work all around. Heavy packages blocked up the way. Other packages were in course of arrival. Nothing could be more evident than that Paris, the great emporium of luxury, was not a city of commerce. It was observed, as a remarkable fact, by Mr. Thompson, the British Superintendent of Industrial Arrangements, that there was a total absence of all the usual mechanical appliances for moving large and heavy packages, not a single crane being provided for that purpose. For a week or two matters seemed to be very little mending, when, at my usual hour of nine, waiting in the Palais d'Industrie for my fellow-jurors, a buzz went forth that the Emperor was coming. He did come, at a very rapid pace, with a few gentlemen in his suite; went into the chaos outside; expressed himself angrily, as I afterwards understood, at the supineness of those in office; and came back looking very unamiable. The eagle in the dovecote fluttered them into motion—those who were taking matters as quietly as the guards and engine-drivers of a French railway-train when some accidental obstruction has to be removed out of its course. In such cases—one of which I had the misfortune to observe for two tedious hours—Jupiter, or some other deity, is invoked in a torrent

of *sacrés*, but the waggoner never puts his shoulder to the wheel. I am speaking of nearly ten years ago. Working now upon commercial principles which have got rid of the lazy system of Protection, French labourers will learn to emulate the silent, untiring industry, which they used to despise in the English navvies who made their iron-ways.

If Frenchmen be deficient in the rougher operations of labour, there can be no doubt of their individual excellence and power of combination in the nicer manipulations of industrial art. Especially are they excellent in every process of a literary character, as may be traced in their elementary books, where a logical arrangement simplifies and makes clear subjects which in too many English books are obscure from the absence of method. When I entered my jury-room, I saw what pains had been bestowed upon the preparatory books, in which a Juror should note down his opinions upon the objects he would be called upon to inspect. To a practical man of business, or to a man of letters, these paraphernalia, which the Juror was supposed to carry about with him, would appear cumbrous and unnecessary. The French Jurors, who had ample time to bestow upon a careful examination of every article in their class, never stirred, as it appeared to me, till they had made a scrupulous entry, according to the prescribed form, of the most minute thing they were called upon to notice. My excellent friend, Mr. De la Rue, with whom I had the good fortune to be daily associated in the duties of a Juror, and from whose exquisite taste I learnt very much as to the due appreciation of works of industrial art, was contented, as I was too glad to be, with such a brief

notation as would enable us to get through our work in a day of six or seven hours. Three or four weeks of such employment was really not child's play. Mr. Henry Cole, in a very able Paper on the general management of the British portion of this Exhibition, arguing that the Jury system must be unsatisfactory, has described some of the laborious and irksome duties of a Juror. He says, "To begin work as early as eight in the morning—to wait for companion Jurors who are not punctual—to pace literally over miles of exhibiting ground—to examine stalls and cases, and meet with no exhibitor or agent present to show or explain them, or to find the glass-case locked and no key producible—to haunt committee-rooms and get no quorum for business,—and to do this day after day is what most of the British Jurors did scrupulously for many weeks."

In the discharge of my office as a Juror, I had the opportunity of enlarging my knowledge of the Arts with which I had been associated as a Publisher. The commercial advantage of this experience to me was now trifling, for I had almost ceased to engage in publishing speculations, and was content to repose upon the honour, if not the profit, I had obtained. In the Great Exhibition of London, the Report of the Jury on Printing, &c., drawn up by A. Firmin Didot, C. Whittingham, and T. De la Rue, says "The Jury have strongly regretted that almost the whole of the Printers of England have refrained from exhibiting the beautiful productions of their presses, owing to the instructions given to the Local Commissioners, which stated that printed books were inadmissible. * * * * The same principle which prevented the English printers from exhibiting their works has

deprived the publishers of the opportunity of taking, at the Great Exhibition of all Nations, that high position to which their beautiful and carefully edited works would have justly entitled them. The names of Longman, Murray, Moxon, Bohn, Pickering, and of a great many others, are for ever inseparable from the history of English literature; and thousands would again have seen with satisfaction, and shown with pride to foreigners, the numerous, cheap, neatly printed, and beautifully illustrated productions of Mr. Charles Knight, who in ministering to the intellectual wants and pleasures of the people, has given in the right direction an impetus which is still felt in all branches of art and manufacture connected with this Class." Almost in an equal degree in the Paris Exhibition the Printing of Great Britain was most imperfectly represented. I accounted for this by the fact that the printers of books are rarely the publishers. In France, on the contrary, the printers and publishers in numerous cases united the two characters. There was another remarkable peculiarity in the Book-trade of France and Belgium as compared with that of Great Britain. Paris was not, as London is, almost the exclusive seat of the book manufacture. In large towns of France, such as Tours, Chatillon, Limoges, and Lyons; of Belgium, such as Tournay, Malines, and Liège, the production of books resolved itself into a branch of the factory system, great numbers of workpeople being gathered under one roof, to perform all the operations necessary for the manufacture of a book, with the exception of paper-making. The late Lord Ashburton was exceedingly interested in a description I gave at the Jury Meeting of the specimens exhibited by Messrs.

Mâme and Company, of Tours. We spent some time in conversing with the intelligent head of this large manufactory, where all the processes connected with printing and binding, including the arts of the designer and engraver, were carried through for the production of about eight hundred different volumes, varying from the small Prayer-book, bound, for thirty-five centimes—threepence-halfpenny—to the illustrated local history for a hundred francs. The extreme cheapness of their works was attained by the continued production of large impressions for a constant and universal demand. I pointed out in my report that the nearest parallel case in England was that of the productions of Bibles, Testaments, and Prayer-books by the Universities and the Queen's Printer. Cheap as these privileged books with us were in 1855, they have been sold even at a cheaper rate since a Parliamentary Inquiry into the monopoly, which has unquestionably many advantages, and which requires only to be watched by public opinion to effect that combination of cheapness with accuracy which the consumers have a right to expect.

Even ten years ago the processes connected with those branches of Industry associated under the generic name of Printing, had derived such an extension that their variety had become embarrassing. The directors of the Imperial Printing Office of Austria had brought together in this Exhibition illustrations of every mode of multiplying copies which had become auxiliary to typography and engraving. The general character of these processes is now familiar to most persons as stereotype, electrotype, chromotypography, lithography, chromolithography, nature-printing, photography. It was

to me a matter of some surprise that it became the duty of the Jurors of the Class to which I belonged to examine specimens of the wonderful art of copying forms by the action of light. There was a Photographic department in the separate Exhibition of the Fine Arts. Why they were not put together was a perplexity to some of us who wished conscientiously to give an opinion of the merits of these productions. We were told that we were not to consider their excellence as works of art, but look only to the perfection with which the process had been carried through. It was difficult, if not impossible, to separate the two characters. Photography could scarcely be considered to enter into the domain of printing; but I saw in this Exhibition the results of efforts to make photography a real printing process,—to make the sun an engraver as well as a painter. M. Niépce, the nephew of Daguerre, had many disciples labouring for this purpose. At his apartments as Governor of the Louvre, he showed several of us what he was aiming at, by producing through the action of a bright light an etching from which an impression could be taken.

The opportunities which I possessed of comparing the typography of various nations, enabled me to judge how far we exceeded, or fell short of, the average standard of excellence. I came to the conclusion, that, generally speaking, English books were more correctly printed than the French, especially when a quotation is introduced from another language. I knew that the English compositor was not better educated than the French. I had long lamented, not only that the race of scholarly compositors was almost extinct, but that every *proof*

which I had to read exhibited tokens of ignorance or slovenliness, which I did not encounter in my earlier acquaintance with the London press. The comparative superiority in the correctness of English books was to be attributed to the fact that, with us, the reading of proof is charged in addition to the composition, whilst in most French printing-offices no such charge enters into the cost. The "reader" of a London office, though occasionally capricious and conceited, especially as regards punctuation, renders essential service even to an experienced writer; but he is invaluable to those who write illegibly, or with a magnificent contempt of *points* and other niceties, which ladies and gentlemen of genius affect to despise. The Belgian books in the Paris Exhibition, taken as a whole, were very indifferently printed, in comparison with those of France and the German States. Their manufacture of books, a few years before 1855, was based upon a system of piracy. Before France insisted upon international copyright, and there was some consideration to be paid for authorship, the Belgian books were lowered in every quality of typographical excellence by the ruinous competition of the publishers to produce non-copyright works. A Belgian printer pointed out the consequence of this system, under which, if a publisher issued a novel at 2 fr. 75 c., it was instantly published by another at 75 c. The literary labour having been common to every plunderer, the outward quality of the book was degraded to the lowest standard of unnatural cheapness. In England the competition has been less injurious, although something like the same process was going on, in the reprint of American novels. But, at the present time, the excessive mul-

tiplication of newspapers, and other cheap periodicals, has called into existence a host of compositors, whose only notion of typography is to pick up as many thousand types in an hour as young and nimble fingers can accomplish. Some of these imperfectly instructed artisans find their way into the establishments for book-printing. Their operations may be readily traced. They systematically refuse to follow an author's copy as to Capital Letters. Careful writers never use Capitals indiscriminately. They reserve them for proper names, official titles, and other matters which require this distinguishing mark. But the new race of compositors know no such vain distinctions. It is sufficient for them that it requires an additional muscular effort to lift the hand to the *upper case* in which the Capitals are placed. I am constrained to say that, whilst Printing in England has progressed as a Manufacture, it has deteriorated as an Art, in too many instances.

The Exhibition of London was to be the herald of universal peace. All nations were to beat their swords into ploughshares. A sort of political millennium was at hand. The prospect was a little clouded when, within two months of the close of our Temple of Concord, Louis Napoleon, by a *coup d'état,* swept away the Republic, and shortly after established the Empire. But the announcement that "The Empire is Peace" seemed to promise something better for the world than the devastating career of his uncle, which the French had so long called glory that even Englishmen were coming to be believers in Saint Napoleon. But another ruler, an autocrat, whose ambition had long been a matter of alarm to pacific statesmen, fancied that the integrity of the Ottoman

Empire was a delusion out of which England might be cajoled, or bribed, even if the new government of France chose to hazard a war. So the territories of the Porte were invaded by Russian troops. But the two Western Powers had their own opinions of what was just and safe. The Czar was stubborn. The new Allies were firm. The combined English and French fleets entered the Black Sea, after the Turkish fleet had been destroyed by the Russian Admiral in the harbour of Sinope. At the end of March, 1854, England and France declared war against Russia. Then came a period of popular excitement, which awakened in my mind something like the interest of the great war of half a century previous. But this war was on a grander scale of armament, even than the closing years of the Peninsular Campaigns, when Wellington had almost overcome the difficulty of persuading his government that "a little war" was the most useless and dangerous thing that a great nation could undertake. This was not likely to be a little war, for the greatest military nation of Europe was in alliance with the greatest naval power. In July, 1854, when ten thousand French troops, destined for the Baltic, embarked at Boulogne on board English ships, Napoleon III. thus addressed them: "Soldiers, Russia having forced us to war, France has armed five hundred thousand of her children. England has called out a considerable number of troops. To-day our fleets and armies, united for the same cause, dominate in the Baltic as well as in the Black Sea. I have selected you to be the first to carry our eagles to those regions of the North. English vessels will convey you there; a unique fact in history, which proves the intimate alliance of the

two great nations (*peuples*), and the firm resolution of the two governments not to abstain from any sacrifice to defend the right of the weak, the liberty of Europe, and the national honour."

When I went to Paris, in June, 1855, the combined operations of the English and French forces had been carried forward for more than a year. In September the Allied troops landed in the Crimea, and the battle of the Alma ended in a victory, which might have been followed up by more decisive results. Then came the long siege of Sebastopol; the chivalrous charge at Balaclava, which was "not war," but madness; the great battle of Inkermann; the storm in the Black Sea; and the winter of intense suffering. The Crimea disclosed our weakness as well as our strength. Forty years of peace had unfitted our home Departments for the organization of war upon a large scale. All our shortcomings were patent to the world in a Parliamentary Inquiry, whilst France might conceal her mistakes under the Censorship of the Press. It was altogether a novel feature in the Russian war that the power of English journalism forbade every attempt at concealment. Wellington would not have endured that such a man as William Russell—all-observant, bold, honest, and patriotic, should have accompanied his army, to record its actions in words so stirring and appropriate that the historian might be content to follow the spirited sketches of the Times Reporter. But Wellington did not live in the age of the Electric Telegraph. He probably would as little have approved of the declaration of Lord Palmerston in the House of Commons, on the 26th of April, 1855, "It is my intention to request my noble friend at the head of

the War Department, to urge upon the Commander of the Forces to let us have every day some information of what is passing at the seat of war." Every day! perhaps every hour! Hot from the terrible siege, rushes the lightning spark over land and sea. The bell tinkles in a quiet room at Whitehall; the needles move; the mind at the other end of the wire is telling its wondrous tale through a medium as marvellous as ever was conceived of magic communication by the wildest Eastern fancy.

Universally known as were our administrative errors, I heard in Paris no sarcasms about our presumed incapacity for war. The French saw, not without admiration, how a people more given to trade than to fighting could, out of the appliances of their commerce, remedy the evils which long habits of peace had engendered. Never in the history of man did the productive forces of a nation so instantly concentrate themselves upon the supply of urgent and sudden necessities as in the second stage of the war in the Crimea. As remarkable, too, was the patriotism of the collective nation, and the self-devotion of individuals, in adopting the most practical means to repair what was manifestly the consequence of official incapacity or negligence. In a few months the dismal scene of the winter was changed altogether, not more by a change of season than by a change of policy. Whilst I was in Paris there were some gloomy forebodings of the issue of the siege of Sebastopol. The French had attacked the Malakhoff, and the English the Redan, but were repulsed by the Russians with severe loss. Within six weeks after I had left Paris in July, Sebastopol had fallen. England was wild with the news brought by the Electric Telegraph. I

was in London in the morning, was examining the old Roman walls of Colchester in the afternoon, and was supping at Norwich. All at once the great market-place of that city was lighted up as by a tremendous conflagration; tar-barrels were blazing till midnight; the bells were ringing; the town-bands were playing; the people were shouting. I certainly never in the war against the first Napoleon saw such a vigorous demonstration of national feeling. We became soberer in a few weeks, when we learned how large a share the French had in this exploit, and how our own efforts, great as they were, had been to a certain extent unsuccessful. The newspaper readers began to be critical. We disdained the French praises of our bravery. We fancied we knew all about the matter when we read Mr. Russell's correspondence. But nine or ten years have opened new sources of information, French, English, and Russian. To compare and to judge impartially will be the business of another generation, and perhaps even of this in a few years, when all shall agree that the truth is not likely to be developed by keeping alive national jealousies by the pens of picturesque writers, and that the sober records of one who was opposed both to the French and English—General Todleben—are of far more permanent value than all the fascinations of brilliant authorship.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN the Session of 1854, a Committee of the House of Commons was sitting to examine witnesses upon that question of the abolition of the Newspaper Stamp, which had occupied the attention of the Legislature twenty years before. After the Meeting of Parliament in 1855, a very general opinion prevailed that the then Penny-stamp would be entirely abolished, except for the purpose of transmitting a newspaper by post. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir George Cornewall Lewis, through his private Secretary, Sir Alexander Duff Gordon, requested me to inform him what was the greatest circulation of each number of the Penny Magazine at any time. In giving this information I referred him to a little book which Mr. Murray had just published for me—"The Old Printer and the Modern Press,"—in which I had taken a rapid view of the circulation and character of penny periodicals at the beginning of 1854. I had stated that of four of these a million sheets were then sold weekly. In my letter, I thought it right to convey fully my opinion upon the question of the abolition of the Stamp, and in support of that opinion I mentioned that Dr. Arnold was strongly impressed with the notion that a Newspaper was the best vehicle for communicating knowledge to the people; the events of the day, he maintained, were a definite

subject to which instruction could be attached in the best possible manner. An extract from the letter thus written by me may fitly introduce the general subject of the extension of the Newspaper Press during the last eight or nine years, upon which I propose to treat in this chapter. "The change in the character of the Penny Periodicals during the last five or six years, from the lowest ribaldry and positive indecency to a certain propriety—and of which frivolity is the chief blemish—is an assurance to me that the cheapening of Newspapers by the removal of the Stamp will not let in that flood of sedition and blasphemy which some appear to dread. The character of the mass of readers is improved. In my little book I have opposed the removal of the Stamp, chiefly on the ground that a quantity of local papers would start up, that would be devoted to mere parish politics, and sectarian squabbles, instead of being national in their objects; and that would huddle together the worst of criminal trials and police cases, without attempting to suggest any sound principles of politics, or furnish any useful information. To provide a corrective to this, I have devised the plan detailed in the circular, which I left with you. I sent out an intelligent traveller into the Midland districts last week, confidentially to explain this plan to active printers in towns that had no local paper; and his report shows that the principle will be eagerly adopted."

The plan which I had devised was founded upon my old newspaper experience, during which, for several years, three-fourths of the local Paper of Berkshire and Buckinghamshire were printed at the

"Express" Office at Windsor, and one-fourth at a branch office at Aylesbury. In connection with a highly respectable printing firm, I commenced the publication of the "Town and Country Newspaper" immediately upon the repeal of the Stamp-duty in 1855. There were many elements of success in this plan, but it was defeated by the complex and expensive organization necessary to supply small adventurers into the new world of journalism with the very few impressions each required at first to meet his local demand. Nor was my belief that this sort of publication might be made the vehicle for combining, not only a well digested body of news, but sound practical information upon many subjects of public interest, destined to be realized. The readers in very small towns, in which the one printer was generally the first to make the experiment which I proposed, did not very anxiously desire to see the newspaper made an instrument of education, or for the advancement of objects of public improvement. The undertaking was not remunerative, and I had no desire to press upon my partners the continuance of a scheme that did not pay as quickly as was expected. The plan became very extensively adopted after the establishment of penny local Journals had created a demand, and they were found to supply a public want. Four hundred such provincial Papers are said to be now partly printed in London; but I am informed by a friend, who is perfectly well-acquainted with the curious facts connected with the present state of local and other Newspapers, that the plan of printing one side of a weekly sheet in London is now going out of use. There is another mode adopted, of making the same information, and the same labour of

setting up the types, available for many papers, which is a striking example of the effect of new combinations of industrial art and science, for the diminution of expense of production. There is an enterprising proprietor of a local newspaper in one of our large manufacturing towns, who has a stereotyping office in London, and supplies small journals throughout the country with stereotyped matter at a low rate per column, of which he will send any number of columns up to twenty-four. The plan is so simple and so convenient that his customers are very numerous, and he is considered to be making a much better profit out of his stereotype plates, than by his well-circulated Journal. This system is one of the many instances, with which we are becoming more and more familiar, of co-operation for Production. Perhaps a more striking example is furnished in the economical management of some *daily* papers in England and Scotland, published out of London, of which number there are now nearly forty. Several of the proprietors of these large local journals have associated for the establishment of an office in London, with a literary staff, compositors, and stereotype-founders. There are five or more papers which participate in this arrangement. Each paper belonging to this league uses the stereotypes according to its especial wants and convenience, sometimes all that is dispatched; more frequently a selection is made. I have before me a Provincial Daily Paper, of October 20th, 1864,—a large well printed sheet, price 1*d*. My friend has marked for my information the matter which has been thus transmitted to this journal, as to others, by express trains, generally leaving London at 5 p.m., and reaching places two hundred miles

distant by 11 p.m. The matter which I thus find in this paper comprises eight folio columns, and necessarily contains the very latest news and comment. What a power do the Managers of this journalistic Confederacy possess for the direction of public opinion, and how real a matter of congratulation it is that the time is past when the influence of the Newspaper Press was too frequently inimical to quiet and good government! Dr. Arnold wrote to the Archbishop of Dublin in 1833, "I think that a newspaper alone can help to cure the evil which newspapers have done and are doing."

In considering the feasibility of carrying forward upon a large scale, the plan of printing the general portion of a newspaper in London, to be completed by the publisher in a country town, I was careful to inform myself of the exact number of Local Journals in every county. The materials were to be collected from a very useful publication, "The Newspaper Press Directory," by C. Mitchell, which had then been established nine or ten years. It is continued annually at the present time; and a comparison merely of the quantity of printed matter in the volume for 1855, and that for 1864, will at once point to the vast increase in Journalism. I find amongst my papers a voluminous abstract of the state of the Local Newspaper Press, which I drew out six months before the abolition of the Stamp. In the forty English counties there were 120 cities and towns, omitting London, in which Newspapers were then published. But in these there were 261 papers, the more important places having, in many instances, more than one such organ of intelligence. To my abstract I appended the number of inhabi-

tants of each town. The result of my examination was, that there were 350 populous towns *without any Local Paper*, viz.—

99	Towns	with population	above	2000—	under	3000.
106	,,	,,	,,	3000—	,,	5000.
63	,,	,,	,,	5000—	,,	7000.
82	,,	,,	,,	7000 and upwards.		

These were statistical facts of deep significance.

The amount of the change which has been produced in eight years by the abolition of the Newspaper Stamp and the Advertisement Duty—in some degree also by the repeal of the tax upon paper—is sufficiently indicated by the following figures:—There were published in England, at the commencement of the present year, 919 journals. Of these 240 belonged to London; and these included 13 daily morning papers, 7 evening, and 220 published during the week and at intervals. But these London Journals, not daily, comprise the purely literary and scientific papers—the legal and medical, and more numerous than all, the religious journals. Further, since I made my abstract of Local Papers, there have started into flourishing existence no less than 32 *district* journals of the Metropolis and its suburbs. Taking these 240 metropolitan and suburban papers from the total 919 published in England, I find that there are now 679 *Country* Newspapers, instead of the 261 which I found existing in 1855. I may infer, therefore, without going into a minute examination of the matter, that the 350 populous places which, at that time, had no newspaper of their own, are now not left without a vehicle for the publication of their local affairs, whether important or frivolous, whether affecting a nation or a parish. To finish this

summary, I may add that Wales has 87 journals; Scotland 140; Ireland 140; the British Isles 14; making up for the United Kingdom a total of 1250. Of the aggregate circulation of these Journals, it is impossible to arrive at any accurate estimate. At the beginning of the century, the annual circulation of newspapers in England and Wales was 15 millions. In 1853, as was shown by the Stamp-Office returns, the annual circulation of England and Wales was 72 millions, and of Scotland and Ireland, each 8 millions. Even the circulation in 1853 was an astounding fact, and I then wrote, "Visit, if you can, the interior of that marvellous human machine the General Post Office, on a Friday evening from half-past five to six o'clock. Look with awe upon the tons of newspapers that are crowding in to be distributed through the habitable globe. Think silently how potent a power is this for good or for evil. You turn to one of the boxes of the letter-sorters, and your guide will tell you, 'this work occupies not half the time it formerly did, for everybody writes better.'" Some of the elder country newspapers and some that have started into life since the repeal of the Stamp, have a circulation that is to be numbered by thousands. But if we only assign a sale of 1000 each to the 679 country papers in England, we have a total annual circulation of 235 millions. The Scotch and Irish Journals will probably swell the aggregate annual circulation of the United Kingdom to 250 millions. Taking the entire population at 30 millions, this estimate would give eight newspapers in the course of the year to every person: and assuming that every newspaper has six readers, there is no present want in these Kingdoms of the literary

means of keeping the entire mass of the people informed upon every current event and topic. But there may be other wants to be met besides those which are supplied by the vast increase of journalism before the newspaper can be within the reach of the whole of the adult population. There are thousands growing into men and women who, during the last decade, when newspapers have been rising up for an almost universal use, have acquired the ability to read. The numbers of those wholly uninstructed must be very few in populous districts compared with the days when the newspaper was the most highly taxed article of necessity or luxury. Now that it has become one of the cheapest of inventions for the supply of a general want, it may be well to inquire into the causes which interfere with an universal supply.

An ingenious and instructive "Newspaper Map of the United Kingdom," accompanies Mitchell's Newspaper Press Directory. It is suggestive of several important facts in our social condition, which we are apt to pass over in looking at its multifarious details. The several districts of the kingdom are indicated by different colours, not only as manufacturing, mining, and agricultural, but by other colours, where two or more of these large classes of occupation are combined. When we glance at the Agricultural Counties, twenty-three in number, extending from Somersetshire to Lincolnshire, and bounded by the inland Manufacturing and Agricultural Counties, five in number, we feel something like wonder that amongst these agricultural communities there should appear so great a number of towns having one or more newspapers. It is no matter of surprise that

the Manufacturing and Mining Counties, with their enormous populations, should be dotted with a circular mark, indicating the publication of one paper, or with a square mark, indicating more than one. Nor are we surprised that where there is a mixed population, in which farms, and factories, and underground operations, supply the funds for the maintenance of labour, the newspapers should be as numerous as in the seats of the Woollen and Cotton Manufacture, and in the great ports associated with them. A minuter investigation into this map will show how the purely Agricultural Districts so abound with Local Newspapers. The places in which they are published are, with scarcely an exception, situated on the lines of railway. The Railway and the Local Newspaper seem to have sprung up together into an extension which, even ten years ago, it would have required some effort of the imagination to consider possible. How is it, then, that the agricultural labouring population must be held as very imperfectly supplied with the same means of information as the residents in towns? Look at this Newspaper Map, and observe what large blank spaces lie between every thread of the great network of railways. In the North Riding of Yorkshire, which is almost purely agricultural, these blanks are as remarkable as those of Wales when we get away from the Mining Districts, or Scotland, when we have passed from the seats of manufactures and commerce into the mountainous districts. In the blank spaces thus indicated, where dwell the great food-producing population, in small villages and hamlets, the newspaper never comes except by the post. The extension, of late years, of the operations of the Post-office, has rendered the

number of those partially excluded from communication with the outer world, much less than it was long after the introduction of Penny Postage. But, with the extension of the Post, the delivery of newspapers by special messengers from the towns has almost ceased. Bearing in mind the cost of communication, whether by direct delivery or by a postage stamp, we need not be surprised that the newspaper, London or provincial, is not often to be found in the labourer's cottage.

The belief that newspapers would be necessarily instruments of evil has passed away. That any local journal of the present day, however unmarked by literary ability, could fail to be an instrument for rousing the labourer's mind out of its sluggishness I cannot readily understand. Books, however strenuous and in some degree successful may have been the exertions of book-hawking associations, have scarcely yet sufficiently interested the cottager to induce him to become a purchaser. Village Lending-Libraries are, I fear, not very numerous. The various modes of awakening the reasoning or imaginative powers have hardly satisfied the hopes of the benevolent, that a time was coming when the instruction of the village school would have some durable influence in after life. As a mere matter of national profit, to say nothing of higher motives, the practical education of the agricultural labourer ought not to terminate with the school form. The country has less demand than ever for the mere digger and delver. The whole system of agricultural operations is being changed by that great power of steam, which a hundred years ago revolutionised our manufacturing processes. The cry on every side will be for skilled

labourers. It is not so much that we shall want chemists and mechanicians amongst the wearers of the smock-frock, but that we want young men with minds apt to learn, and fit to superintend. The taste for reading books has yet to be formed amongst this class. The desire for knowing what is going on in the world through the newspaper is natural and almost instinctive. The ordinary details of intelligence are now associated with something more than the "common things" which a nobleman, whose loss we have so recently deplored, was desirous to have taught. We can imagine no more useful task for the Clergyman, the Squire, or the intelligent Farmer than that of giving a weekly lecture upon the Newspaper. I mentioned, ten years ago, in my book on the Modern Press, that a witness of well-known intelligence told the Committee on Newspaper Stamps that in his village he tried the experiment of reading "The Times" to an evening class of adult labourers, and that he could not read twenty lines without feeling that there were twenty words in it which none of his auditors understood. He wanted, therefore, cheap newspapers, that would be so written as not to puzzle the hearers or readers by such words as "operations," "Channel," or "fleet." Surely this dense ignorance must now have passed away, and it is not necessary to make an attempt to reach the minds of the least instructed class by having newspapers "like school primers, containing words of one or two syllables." The difficulty is not to understand *words* but to comprehend unfamiliar things. The Newspaper awakens curiosity, but some intelligent friend will always be needed by the uneducated gradually to lead them forward to the knowledge which

alone can make the hard things of every-day intelligence comparatively plain; and who would, now and then, talk good-humouredly, and even jocosely, about the prejudices, whether of classes or individuals, that the newspaper frequently presents in its reports of the sayings and doings of public men. The Weekly Lecture would perhaps be an easier matter to accomplish than to set up a "Gazette of the Village;" which, like the "Gazette" of Paul Louis Courier, should be neither scientific nor literary, and would call things and people by their right names. In the "Town and Country Newspaper," I wrote a short series of articles, which I thus introduced as "Grandfather Smith's Lectures:"—

"In the centre of a little village about fourteen miles from London, but which village is as secluded as a Highland glen, there is a pretty old-fashioned house known to all the neighbours as 'Grandfather Smith's Cottage.' Grandfather Smith is what is called 'a character'—that is, he has opinions of his own; and having a small competency and few superfluous wants, he is not very careful to fashion his opinions so as to please the squire or any other rural authority. After a good deal of opposition from these authorities, and much indifference on the part of farmers and labourers, he has succeeded in establishing a system which is an educational experiment. He once kept a day-school; but all his scholars deserted him, some twenty years ago, for the National School, and so the school-room became a lumber-room. This spring, however, the old gentleman has been stirred into unwonted activity by the war; and so he cleared out the ink-bespattered desks, arranged the worm-eaten forms, and invited all the village to come to him once a week to hear the newspaper read. He did this in the belief that his humbler neighbours had no inclination to read the newspaper themselves; but in this he was soon undeceived. He found that the daily newspaper, although a little stale sometimes, penetrated to his solitudes; and that the cheap weekly newspaper was growing into request. Grandfather Smith therefore bethought himself to give a *Weekly Lecture on the Newspaper.* The notion might savour a little of presumption; but he was indifferent to that sort of opinion which refuses to believe that any work of a

public nature can be undertaken from a sense of duty. So, duly at seven o'clock, is Grandfather Smith's ancient school-room filled by old and young; and, what has excited considerable surprise, the curate and his wife, as well as the minister of the small Wesleyan chapel across the common, have occasionally been amongst his hearers."

In advocating the general circulation of Newspapers, and in recommending a very obvious method of adding something to their usefulness in districts where the hard workers have little aptitude for digesting what they read, I can scarcely be suspected of setting Journalism above other instruments of knowledge. In 1851, I took part in the proceedings of the Northampton Mechanics' Institute, at which Earl Fitzwilliam was the Chairman. Lord Wodehouse was one of the most effective speakers, as were my old fellow-labourer Dr. Conolly, Mr. Layard, and Mr. George Cruikshank. At that time Mr. Cobden had recently propounded the eccentric advice to the young men of Manchester, not to trouble themselves much with the perusal of books, but to read the newspaper. I said to the Northampton young men that, much as I respected the newspaper, as the great instrument of civilisation, I believed that if their reading were confined to newspapers, excellent as was that reading in general, various as was the information they gave, and infinite as were their resources to convey knowledge, men's minds would be narrowed and debased by being so limited. I believed, moreover, if that had been the general tone of the mind of this country, and the reading of newspapers had superseded the reading of all other literature, the public would never have attained a right knowledge of what a newspaper should be, and that newspapers themselves would

never have become what they are. The newspaper and the book ought to go hand in hand.

The staple of a Newspaper is news. I have shown what labour and what cost were necessary in 1812 for a Local Journal to obtain even such scanty intelligence as slow and imperfect communication enabled me to present to the readers of the Windsor newspaper. I have also indicated far more serious difficulties of fighting with space and time, which the London Daily Papers had then to encounter.* The Peace came. The character of intelligence was far less interesting. The London Journals then bestowed more care upon the reports of domestic affairs, especially those which indicated the current of public opinion, when almost every community was agitating for Reform. But the Morning Papers were often late, especially when there was a field day in Parliament; and when there was any great meeting at Birmingham, or Liverpool, or Manchester, to demand a special report, it was rarely published till the second day after the meeting had been held. Marvels, however, were occasionally accomplished by "The Times," and other Morning Papers, which set people asking where all this neck-and-neck race for intelligence would conduct us. The age of railroads came, and then, indeed, a vast step was gained in the publication in London of provincial news. There were occasions in which a tolerably full report of a debate at Manchester in the Free Trade Hall, was published in London before the dial hand had again made its circuit of twelve hours. But these were rare examples of a most costly and complex organization.

* "Passages." Vol. I. p. 130.

A great change was impending. In "A Guide to the Electric Telegraph" by C. M. Archer, published in 1852, it is stated that the application of the Electric Telegraph to the purposes of the Press is due to the author of that handbook. He says, it was in May 1845, when there existed only one Telegraph in this country,—that between Nine Elms and Portsmouth, —that in the "Morning Chronicle," with which he was connected, appeared the first practical application in England of the Telegraph to the purpose of reporting public meetings. Mr. Archer states that on the occasion of the great anti-corn-law banquet to Mr. Cobden, the "extraordinary quantity" of two columns and a half of the proceedings, which did not terminate until midnight at Manchester, was completely printed in "The Times" as reported by telegraph, and was at Manchester the next day by one in the afternoon. The "extraordinary quantity" of matter reported by the London Journals at distant places has now become one of the most ordinary incidents in the conduct of the Metropolitan Press. During the summer of 1864 Lord Palmerston's Speeches at Tiverton, Hereford, and Bradford, and Mr. Gladstone's Speeches in Lancashire were reported through the Telegraphic wires at as great a length as if the reporters had transmitted the words in the old ordinary way. On several occasions the length of these reports, as they appeared in the Morning Papers, exceeded seven columns. So instantaneous is the collateral dispatch to provincial towns that it is possible for a statesman to speak at Glasgow in the evening, and to find on his breakfast table next morning, in the Local Paper, the comments of the London Editors on his Speech. It is not the practice

now for every leading newspaper to have its own telegraphic reporter, for if that were the case, the ordinary business traffic would be seriously impeded. If each of the Morning Papers required a report of the same proceedings, and some of the leading Provincial Papers also wanted special reports, the wires would be blocked. Thus it is that the Telegraph Companies have organized an "Intelligence Department." Few, perhaps, have any notion of the nature and extent of this wonderful organization. Its national importance can scarcely be over-rated.

The Electric Telegraph has become the news-bearer of the world. It has swept away many antiquated ideas; it has substituted facts in the place of conjectures; it has destroyed the ancient sovereignty of one of the most potent rulers of public opinion. The great dramatic poet, who lived before the days when this potentate swayed the world through newspapers, thus makes her speak, full of tongues:

"Open your ears: For which of you will stop
The vent of hearing when loud Rumour speaks?
I, from the orient to the drooping west,
Making the wind my post-horse, still unfold
The acts commenced on this ball of earth:
Upon my tongues continual slanders ride;
The which in every language I pronounce,
Stuffing the ears of men with false reports.
I speak of peace, while covert enmity,
Under the smile of safety, wounds the world:
And who but Rumour, who but only I,
Make fearful musters, and prepar'd defence,
Whilst the big year, swoln with some other griefs,
Is thought with child by the stern tyrant war,
And no such matter? Rumour is a pipe
Blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures;
And of so easy and so plain a stop

That the blunt monster with uncounted heads,
The still discordant wavering multitude,
Can play upon it."

[*King Henry IV.* Part II. Induction.]

"From the orient to the drooping west" a "post-horse" infinitely more fleet than the wind, brings us facts, sometimes indeed mixed up with "false reports," which may deceive for a few hours "the blunt monster with uncounted heads," but which are very quickly scattered by the same agency which brought them. These facts may be meagre, may require to be verified and corrected by the more comprehensive narratives of that ubiquitous eye-witness "Our own Correspondent," and may be explained and illustrated by the lucid commentaries of such papers as the "Times," never at any period equalled in breadth of view and felicity of exposition. But these rapid communications very rarely indeed are founded upon "surmises, jealousies, conjectures," except where misjudging politicians choose to prostitute the power which ought to be essentially the vehicle of truth. Happily such do not exist, and cannot exist, in our own country.

I have a friend,—once amongst the most useful and trustworthy of my fellow-labourers,—who is the presiding mind of the Intelligence Department of one of the two Telegraph Companies. It is not that he has any concern with the actual working of the great machinery which daily and hourly transmits throughout our three kingdoms foreign and colonial news; summaries of debates in Parliament; returns of markets of every kind; shipping news; racing news;*

* Sporting News, as I am informed, constitutes a great item with the Telegraph Companies. There are about 180 subscribers, chiefly publicans; and the subscription from each is 20*l.* a year.

states of the weather at the different ports; and last, but not least important, those despatches from almost every quarter of the world, which constantly meet the eye of the newspaper reader as "Reuter's Telegrams." My friend is not responsible for carrying through the marvellous operation of transmitting by the electric wire a Queen's Speech of 965 words, in thirty-one minutes,—an advance of speed which we can scarcely deem less than marvellous compared with the record in the "Daily News" of 1847, that the Queen's Speech of that November was telegraphed at the rate of fifty-five letters in a minute, the whole 730 words being disposed of in two hours. The rate of speed has thus been quintupled in seventeen years. Nor is my friend responsible for the summaries of Parliamentary Debates which now constitute such an important feature in the seventy-one Daily Papers in the United Kingdom. The two Telegraph Companies—the Magnetic and the Electric—have each an Instrument-room at the Houses of Parliament, but only one report of the debates is prepared, which is transmitted by both Companies. The regular occupation of my friend, as intelligence-reporter, is sufficiently onerous to demand the most unremitting assiduity, the most watchful observation, the clearest judgment. He has ceased to be connected with what we call the literary world, but his duties, in many respects, require the exercise of higher qualities than those which ordinarily direct the pen of a merely ready writer. Let me present an imperfect outline of the routine of his daily life. The intelligence-reporter has an office and a bedroom in a house which adjoins and communicates with the Central Office of the Electric Telegraph.

Winter and summer he is at his desk at 6 a.m., at which hour, to a minute, he receives a copy of the "Daily News;" at 6-20 a copy of the "Times;" and about 6-45 the rest of the Morning Papers. A messenger waits to take slips from him into the Instrument-room, and about 6-10 the transmission begins. It is sometimes finished at 7-15; but an effort is always made to have everything completed before 8. This is the "morning express," which varies from fourteen hundred words to fewer than four hundred. I have before me the second Edition of the "Liverpool Daily Post," dated October 13th, 9 a.m. The Telegraphic portion occupies about 150 lines of very close printing, and consists of five separate articles; namely, two from Reuter's Telegram, one headed "Mr. W. E. Gladstone in Lancashire," stating that the London Papers contain reports by telegraph of his speeches at Bolton and Liverpool the day before, and that most of them devote a leading article to the Lancashire visit. Of the leading articles of the "Times," the "Daily Telegraph," the "Daily News," and the "Star" we have then an abstract, which occupies more than a fourth of the whole despatch. Upon the Danish question there is an abstract of the "Times'" Paris Correspondent's letter. I am informed that the commercial part of this morning express is supplied direct by a City reporter, for the Telegraph Offices. The slightest consideration of the tact and promptitude required to deal in an hour, and sometimes less, with the complicated mass of the novel intelligence presented in the Morning Papers, and to interpret their lengthy opinions in brief sentences, so as to give a trustworthy notion of the leading points, must show that the intelligence-

reporter works under a very grave responsibility. This morning express is sent direct to all the largest towns; from these central places the news is repeated to smaller towns in their respective districts.

The morning work is scarcely over before another stream of business messages is set flowing. In addition to the news from the early Daily Papers, a variety of intelligence is transmitted at irregular hours—two reports from the Stock Exchange, with copious quotations; two reports of the Colonial and Foreign Produce Markets; reports of Corn-markets, Tallow-markets, Cattle-markets, Wool-sales. All intelligence of value to men of business is posted immediately at the Exchanges of Liverpool and the other great towns. Reuter's Telegrams arrive at all hours, both of the day and night, and are instantly transmitted, if of great interest. Thus passes his ever-watchful forenoon for the Intelligence-reporter. But then the London Evening Papers come pouring in, and an "evening express" has to be prepared. The Gazettes of Tuesday and Friday furnish a variety of minute details, the accurate transmission of which as to figures and names is of the first importance. The electric dispatch of many of these matters of business does not of course require the presiding judgment of the Intelligence-reporter, but he can never stir from his post, for throughout the day there may be queries from different stations to answer.

To wait upon the mental operations which set the telegraph in motion, there are in the Instrument-gallery of the Electric Company no fewer than eighty or ninety young women employed during the day. But there are many youths who here, like the compositors of a daily paper, are compelled to per-

petual night-work. The untiring Reuter appears at all hours, as he does at the Newspaper Offices, with manifolded copies of his telegram, which has come through every sea beneath which there is the electric wire. The time may not be far distant when another cable, three thousand miles long, may not be irrecoverably sunk in the rocky bed of the Atlantic. But the present want of this direct communication is in some degree remedied by extraordinary vigilance and exertion. At midnight the New York Mail Steamer may have been intercepted by the small steamer belonging to the Telegraph Company, and the news being transmitted to every station in the United Kingdom, it is circulated almost universally before nine o'clock in the morning. The telegraph wires being carried to Cape Clear, the farthest western point of the Irish coast, this feat is accomplished. But the enthusiastic believers in what is to be effected by the telegraph, say that the United Kingdom is too small a country for the display of its feats. Hopes founded not upon vague generalities, but upon the most scientific calculations, point to the speedy realisation of plans that seem almost too vast to be admitted into the mind without a very strong alloy of incredulity. Man is achieving a victory over time and space of which the imperfect beginning called forth our wonder, but we scarcely know how to contemplate the possible end without something like awe.

NOTE TO CHAPTER VIII.

As an illustration of the slowness, even in our times, with which *Intelligence* having no temporary interest—such intelligence as merely opens a question of literary history—excites public curiosity, if promulgated through unusual channels, I give an extract from my "Town and Country Newspaper" of July 21, 1855. Four years after my accidental acquaintance with a book which had been sent, fresh from the press of Sydney to be shown in the Paris Exhibition, the "Edinburgh Review" made the *discovery* of the same book; and produced an elaborate article which attracted universal notice. The Editor intimated, that if Mr. Croker had obtained the knowledge of such a treasure as had been hidden for many years in one of the offices of a law court in New South Wales, he would have made a voyage to the Antipodes to obtain such rare materials for a new edition of his "Boswell." No publisher or author took the least notice of my article. It was in vain that I wrote of "Dr. Campbell's Diary," "We earnestly trust that it may be reprinted in London, under the Copyright Act which gives protection to our colonial literature."

"NEW SUPPLEMENT TO BOSWELL'S LIFE OF JOHNSON.

"We apprehend that our present notice will come as a surprise upon many of our readers. After the elaborate editions of Boswell's Life of Johnson (taken altogether, the most amusing book in our language), with note upon note, collected from every public and private source, it was scarcely

to be expected that any new and extensive illustrations would turn up in our day. Such additions to literary or political history often come forth from hiding-places where nobody would have thought of looking for them. Who would expect that Australia should give to England a most curious and valuable Supplement to Boswell, of unquestionable authenticity? Yet such is the case. Searching carefully, in the discharge of our duty, for anything of interest connected with printing, exhibited in the Great Paris Exhibition, we came to a small space in the Colonial Department of the Annexe, where the products of Sydney were open to view. There were a few books, very neatly bound, three or four of which were printed in Sydney. One of these was a translation into blank verse of the prophet Isaiah. Another bore the following title:—

"'Diary of a Visit to England in 1775, by an Irishman (the Reverend Doctor Thomas Campbell, author of a Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland), and other papers by the same hand With Notes by Samuel Raymond, M.A., Prothonotary of the Supreme Court of New South Wales. Sydney: Waugh and Cox, Publishers, 1854.'

"The Secretary to the Exhibition Commissioners of New South Wales drew our attention particularly to this little book, as being unpublished when he left the colony, and consequently unknown in London; and he obligingly permitted us to borrow it for a few days. We earnestly trust that it may be reprinted in London under the Copyright Act which gives protection to our colonial literature. Meanwhile, we proceed to make our English public acquainted with this interesting work.

"In one of the offices of the Supreme Court of New South Wales was recently discovered, by Mr. David Bruce Hutchinson, a Manuscript, hidden behind an old press which had not been moved for years. This was a Diary, written in a clear bold hand, of which the first entry bears date February 23, 1775. It fortunately came into the possession of Mr. Raymond, who appears, from his notes, to have been well acquainted with the literary history of the period. The name of the writer does not appear in his own Diary; but there is

no doubt that he was the Doctor Thomas Campbell of whom Boswell thus writes:—'On Thursday, 6th April, I dined with him (Dr. Johnson). I mentioned that Dr. Thomas Campbell had come from Ireland to London, principally to see Dr. Johnson. He seemed angry at this observation.' Mr. Croker, in a note upon this passage, quotes Mrs. Thrale's' description of an Irish Dr. Campbell, whom she met at Bath in 1776, and of whom she writes to Johnson, as if he had been unacquainted with the Irishman, describing him as 'very handsome, hot-headed, loud and lively.' Mr. Raymond thinks that Mrs. Thrale referred to a different person of the same name. We are not sure of this, for although the Diary of Dr. Thomas Campbell, and the records of Boswell, unquestionably show that Johnson and the Irish clergyman often met in 1775, and several times at Thrale's house, yet there are passages in the Diary of 'the Irish Dr. Campbell,' as Boswell calls him, which are 'lively' enough to be attached to such a person as Mrs. Thrale describes. The lady might not have met him in 1775. Our Divine seems to have been ready enough to mix in all companies; and to describe what he saw with a freedom which belonged to the manners of the time when he made his appearance in the fashionable and literary society of London. But that the writer of the Diary was 'the Irish Dr. Campbell' of Boswell there can be no doubt.

"We commence our extracts with the Editor's account of the papers which he has so judiciously given to the world:—

"'How long the Manuscript, now offered to the public, lay in its dusty hiding-place in one of the offices of the Supreme Court of New South Wales I have been unable to find out. How it came there, or how it came to the Colony, I have not been able to ascertain; at all events, sufficient has not been elicited by my inquiries to give any clue to the rightful owner of it, or to interfere with my right by discovery to give it to the public. Should it be attempted to cast any doubt on the authenticity of the manuscript, I would without fear submit it to the most rigid scrutiny; it bears upon its face the impress of being, what for the most part it purports to be, a record of the thoughts, feelings, and occurrences likely to attract the notice of an Irishman on his first visit to London in 1775, and subsequently to Paris in 1787. The writing itself, of which a *fac-simile* is annexed, is quaint, and characteristic of the man, who,

at his first breakfast in England, measured the size of the eggs, which struck him as being much smaller than those of his own country. It betrays, but is certainly not disfigured by, the prejudices of the writer's class and country. * * * * He appears, during his short visits to England, to have been much noticed by people of rank and station, as well amongst the English, as his own countrymen; and to have been admitted into that literary circle, which, in that day, revolved around the great luminary of learning, and which is so admirably depicted in the pages of Boswell.'

"Having given this general notice of the book before us, we proceed, without much comment, which would be quite unnecessary, to furnish some extracts, to which we affix distinctive headings."

CHAPTER IX.

FIVE summers ago, I was staying for a month at Langley in Buckinghamshire. The immediate neighbourhood had objects of abiding interest. At Richings, Pope and Addison, Gay and Prior, capped verses amongst the trees which Bathurst planted. The young Milton dwelt with his father at Horton. A venerable church is that of Langley—with restorations in good taste. Beautiful, as well as spacious, is its churchyard. The low-roofed parsonage—a primitive cottage, such as George Herbert would have rejoiced in—is on the west. The churchyard itself is a very "garden of roses." The cluster-rose and the china-rose climb over the railings of the well-preserved tombs. The one yew, of six or eight centuries' growth, is decaying amidst scores of rose trees, the grafts of the last six or eight autumns. The wearied labourer, and the giddy schoolboy, pass reverently by these rose trees, and touch not a flower; for some they recognise as tokens of love, and every tree that sheds its rich June blossoms over the grassy mounds soothingly whispers "all must die."

I was told that the small building abutting on the church is a Library. I found from a County History that Sir John Kedermister had "prepared and adjoined" a Library to Langley church, and there, by his will dated 1631, he provided for some additions

to the existing books. I had no difficulty in obtaining admission to this Library, for its guardian was a good-humoured dame dwelling in an adjacent almshouse, who was seldom troubled with the visits of strangers resorting to the village, dignified in the will of the founder as a "Town." I pass through the family pew of the lords of the manor of Langley, and find myself in a tolerably spacious room, of a very singular character. Five presses, enclosed with panelled doors, line this room. The doors are painted, outside and inside, in various styles of ornamentation—escutcheons, trophies, small figures of apostles and prophets. The figures—in which we recognise the traditional forms which some of the great masters have handed down from the middle ages—are rather coarsely painted; but they are dashed in with a freedom that might not be unworthy of the hand of some minor Flemish or Italian artist, who came to England, as Tempesta came, to paint landscapes and groups upon the wainscoting of great houses. It was a fashion of the day of Charles I. The effect of the coloured panels of this library is not out of character with the purpose of the room. The Great Eye, that looks upon all in heaven and earth, is here attempted to be represented. On the pupil of the eye we read *Deus videt*. Behind the ornamented doors stand, in their proper numerical order, long files of folios, ranged shelf over shelf—well preserved, clean. Crabbe has described the externals of such a collection :—

> "That weight of wood, with leathern coat o'erlaid ;
> Those ample clasps, of solid metal made ;
> The close-press'd leaves, unclosed for many an age ;
> The dull red edging of the well-fill'd page."

It is a brilliant morning, this last of June. I am alone in this antique library. I read the catalogue of the books, written on vellum, which hangs on the wall :—'Catalogus Librorum Omnium in hac Bibliotheca—Aprill, 1638.' What curious volume shall I take down from its seldom disturbed resting-place? Not one of the Greek or Latin classics is here; there is only one secular English writer. It is essentially a library for divinity scholars. Here is a large part of the armoury of the great controversialists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—plain names in this catalogue, without any saintly prefix even to the greatest of the Fathers of the Church. What a delicious place for study! The solemn yew shuts out the glare of the noonday sun from these quarried windows. A place for study—and for reverie. I take down, in a dreamy mood, four folio volumes of "Purchas, his Pilgrimes." I turn over the pages that used to delight my boyhood—those marvellous explorations by land and sea which this laborious old compiler got together with so much taste and judgment. I look at his pilgrimages in India. I light upon the high turrets of Agra, overlaid with pure massive gold! In the chapter upon 'the Magnificence of the Great Mogoll,' I see the gorgeous despot, covered with 'huge gems'—diamonds, emeralds, pearls, rubies. I see fifty elephants, with turrets of gold, bearing ladies looking through 'grates of gold wire,' canopies over them of 'cloth of silver.' Jehanghir is giving audience. I half unconsciously repeat:—

"High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold."

I turn to "The Holy Land Described"—Jerusalem, Emaus, Bethlehem, Sinai. . . . . Let me think. Can He have conversed with these suggestive Pilgrimes in this solitary room? He who, old and blind, ceased not "to wander where the Muses haunt,"

> "but chief
> Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath,
> That wash thy hallow'd feet and warbling flow."

And why not? He who wrote L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, Lycidas, Comus, Arcades, wrote them in his father's house at Horton, within little more than two miles from this spot. From 1632, after Sir John Kedermister founded this library, to 1638, when that broad vellum catalogue was hung upon these walls, John Milton could walk over here through pleasant fields, and pass sweet solitary hours in this room.

The local associations connected with Milton's seven years at Horton were familiar to me in my own youthful time. This passing fancy renews them —all with memories of happy hours when I strolled upon the banks of the Colne—his

> "daily walks and ancient neighbourhood."

I sit upon one of the high-backed carved chairs of the days of James I. Why should not the fair-haired young man have sat in this high-backed carved chair, when, having left Cambridge, he came, as he records, to dwell "at my father's country residence, whither he had retired to pass his old age? In that house" he continues, "I, with every advantage of leisure, spent a complete holiday in turning over the Greek and Latin authors." He sometimes

exchanged the country for the town, either for the purpose of buying books, or for that of learning something new in mathematics or music. He was irresolute, during the earlier portion of his sojourn with his father at Horton, as to the especial dedication of the intellectual power of which he was conscious. He had not altogether matured his resolution not to become a minister of the church. He might still pursue the study of the old theologians as a preparation for future duties; we know how accurately he must have studied them for controversial purposes. In the days before he had made up his mind that "he who would take orders must subscribe slave," a friend at Cambridge had admonished him that the hours of the night pass on, and that the day with him is at hand, "wherein Christ commands all to labour while there is light." To that friend he sends the "Petrarchian stanza, the autobiographical sonnet," on his being arrived at the age of twenty-three. One might be almost tempted to indulge the fancy that, musing in this Langley library amongst these three hundred folios—not altogether dreading the fate of him that "hid the talent," but yet having compunctious fears that his "late spring no bud or blossom show'th,"—he might see the emblem upon the wall beneficently regarding him who prayed for grace to use his lot—

"AS EVER IN MY GREAT TASK-MASTER'S EYE."

The paternal home in the village of Horton is gone. Its very site is doubtful. Forty years ago I believed in an apple tree which grew, or rather decayed, in the traditional garden of Milton. Nothing distinctive is left of him or of his family,

but the blue stone in the chancel of the church which covers the remains of "Sara Milton, the wife of John Milton, who died the 3rd of April, 1637." The young man who mourned for his mother did not long remain at Horton after her death. Early in 1638 he went abroad. The aspect of the fields on which we may track his footsteps has greatly changed. The smart villa here and there has taken the place of the yeoman's homestead; but still the sweet-brier or the vine at the cottage window bids good morrow. The Colne still flows through willow banks. Still, but somewhat rarely now,

> "Young and old come forth to play
> On a sunshine holiday."

Such a holiday was anticipated by the side of the Colne on Queen Victoria's Coronation day of 1859. There was a holiday, but no sunshine. On that day the new Public Rooms of Colnbrook were to be first opened—of Colnbrook no longer hated by outside passengers on fast coaches for its rough pavement, but now a quiet village street. The rain poured down. The jocund rebecks were mute. There was no dancing in the chequered shade. But there were speeches in the new building from men of rank and zealous clergymen, who came there to aid the desire of the tradesmen and farmers and mechanics of this district to have a place of intellectual resort—a news-room, a lecture-room, a concert-room, a library. That library has no broad foundation of ancient learning like its neighbour of Langley. A hundred or two of cheap volumes well-thumbed, sent about from subscriber to subscriber—no magnificent folios, never to be taken out of the room provided for them.

But the inerudite readers of this humbler institution have fountains of knowledge which were not unlocked even for the young scholar of Horton, who wrote to Diodati, in 1637, "where I am now, as you know, I live obscurely, and in a cramped manner." Great questions were stirring the heart of England. The indications of vast social changes were agitating all thoughtful men. "I want," he said, "a more suitable habitation among some companions." He pined for the talk of London—for its news. He wanted to learn there something more than mathematics or music—something that belonged to that exciting time of conflicting opinions. Hampden had refused to pay ship-money, and the great case was to be solemnly argued before the judges. The Star-Chamber had cut off Prynne's ears. Scotland had declared against episcopacy. What a time for a young man, burning with enthusiasm about the rights which a high-spirited nation claimed as its inheritance—what a time for him to learn nothing of the outer world, but from the meagre 'Weeklie Newes' of Nathaniel Butter, which every now and then the Licenser suppressed! The subscribers to the Public Rooms of Colnbrook can watch every pulsation of the great heart of English life, day by day, almost hour by hour. The wondrous agency of the newspaper has made us a nation "apt to learn;" and when the newspaper satisfies the daily curiosity, emulation is roused, even in the imperfectly educated, to search in books for knowledge of which the newspaper opens the long vista in the hitherto dense woods. But upon such old foundations as that of Sir John Kedermister's library, has whatever is noble and enduring in letters been raised. Let us never

forget when we look upon ancient learning thus entombed—with whatever departments of human knowledge such volumes deal—that "Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them, to be as active as that soul whose progeny they are: nay, they do preserve, as in a vial, the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them."*

I have introduced this episode of an Old-Church Library to mark the difference between past times of few books and diligent students, and the present times, of which it may be truly said, "Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh." It has been the business of my life to aid the progress of that almost universal diffusion of printed matter which has been attained by cheapness. I do not repent of my work. It is the duty of every one to endeavour to make *good things* cheap. All the fiscal obstacles to the cheapness of journals and books having been removed, their literary quality ought to be proportionally advanced towards excellence. I proceed to take a broad survey of the *Book Trade* of this country.

Catalogues supply the only authentic materials for estimates of the number of books published at any given period. I have a catalogue,—the first compiled in this country—"of all the books printed in England since the dreadful fire of 1666, to the end of Trinity Term, 1680." The whole number of books printed during these fourteen years was three thousand five hundred and fifty; the yearly average was two hundred and fifty-three, but, deducting reprints, pamphlets, single sermons, and maps, I come to the

* Areopagitica.

conclusion that the yearly average of new *books* was much under a hundred. "The English Catalogue of Books published from January, 1835, to January, 1863,"—a closely printed octavo volume of nine hundred pages—gives the title, size, price, number of volumes, publisher's name, and date of publication, of sixty-seven thousand five hundred distinct works. During the eight years—1855 to 1862, inclusive,—twenty-one thousand three hundred and sixty books were published, giving an average of two thousand six hundred and seventy per annum. From this enumeration all reprints are excluded.

It is not easy to calculate how large a portion of the commerce of books, whether for their production or distribution, is devoted to reprints. A few years ago, being examined by a Committee of the House of Commons, I was asked what English book I thought, next to the Bible, had the largest sale. I hesitated between the 'Pilgrim's Progress' and 'Robinson Crusoe.' What an immense contribution have Bunyan and Defoe made to the Book-trade of England! They had little reward in their generation, for each of them fell upon "evil tongues and evil days." Ten years ago I found the lineal descendant of one of these in a state of extreme poverty. In January, 1854, an old man called upon me at my office, and requested me to look at a book which he held in his hand. It was the third volume of the *Life of Daniel Defoe*, by Walter Wilson. He pointed to the account of the descendants of Defoe, by which it appeared that Samuel, his grandson, had a son James, who, says Wilson, "is living at this time (1830) a boxmaker and undertaker, in Hungerford Market, London." The old man who addressed me

was this great-grandson of Daniel Defoe. The most pressing wants of his three remaining years were relieved by a subscription which I set on foot. Since his death the Queen's Bounty of a hundred pounds has been granted to his daughters, through the exertions of Mr. John Forster, who, as well as Mr. Dickens, assisted me in the endeavour to benefit the old man. At the head of the List of Subscribers which I issued, stands "A Publisher of Robinson Crusoe, £1 0s. 0d." In that list I only find the name of one other bookseller and publisher. "Prince Posterity" is too magnificent a personage to exhibit any vulgar gratitude to those who have clothed him with his richest robes. The times in which we live, happily for the readers as well as the writers, have called forth such a general demand for books that "the patron and the jail" are no longer the common curses of the scholar.

The importance of the commerce of literature, with reference merely to its industrial development, may be estimated from the returns, in the Population Tables of 1861, of the Occupations of the People. We therein find that there are fifty-four thousand persons working in books, of which number forty-seven thousand are males, and seven thousand females. These are the Printers, Bookbinders, and Booksellers. Under the general term "Books" are included Newspapers. We may gather some idea of the extension, since the days of the Tonsons, of the trade in Books, when these returns of Occupations show that the producers and vendors of food for the mind are precisely the same number as the Bakers, and only fourteen thousand fewer than the Butchers and dealers in meat. But we cannot arrive at any-

thing like the same exactness when we attempt to find even an approximation to the number of those who set the printers, bookbinders, and booksellers in motion—the writers. In the Professional Class, whilst we find thirty-eight thousand persons connected with Divinity, thirty-four thousand with Law, thirty-eight thousand with Medicine ; whilst we have thirteen thousand artists and fifteen thousand musicians, we have only three thousand five hundred and eighty authors and literary persons, including one hundred and eighty-five female authors. Surely all those who write books, or are contributors to Reviews and Magazines, are not comprised in this enumeration. Certainly not. The author or the journalist, in many cases, has a more definite rank as a clergyman, a lawyer, or a physician. He may be a Lion in fashionable parties, but the writer, *quà* writer, does not go to court. Female authors were never so abundant, whether as Novelists, or Poetesses, or Biographers. They wisely claim to belong to the Domestic Class—and find their place amongst the Wives, Mothers, and Daughters of the English households. They have no distinctive place in the Census like "the Shoemaker's Wife."

It is a hundred and thirty-three years since the first Magazine—The Gentleman's—was produced in England. It is a hundred and fifteen years since the first Review—The Monthly—was started. These were more ambitious publications in point of size than their illustrious predecessors, the Essayists, who rose up to form the taste of an age possessing very little general knowledge; when "Men not professing learning were not ashamed of ignorance; and in the female world any acquaintance with books was dis-

tinguished only to be censured." Johnson thus describes the age of Addison and Steele. These periodical writers came to take the patronage of men of letters out of the hands of the great and the fashionable, to confide it to the people.

The periodical literature of the present day is almost as wonderful as its newspapers. I have glanced at the extent of this species of literature in 1844, when there were sixty weekly periodical works issued in London, two hundred and twenty-seven monthly, and thirty-eight quarterly; (Vol. ii. p. 278.) To Mitchell's Newspaper Press Directory is now added "A Directory of Magazines, Reviews, and Periodicals." There were in 1863, four hundred and fifty-three Weekly and Monthly Periodicals, and eighty-four Quarterly. Of these five hundred and thirty-seven publications, a hundred and ninety-six are of a decidedly theological character, in which the Church of England is adequately represented, and almost every sect has its peculiar organs.

It would be impossible for me to present even the most superficial analysis of this list of five hundred and thirty-seven periodical works. Many of them are devoted to special branches of science, art, or industry—such as Civil Engineering, Botany and Gardening, Music, Photography; Magazines for Trades wholesale and retail, and for Artisans of various degrees. We have Law Magazines, and Magazines of Medicine and Surgery, and Nautical Magazines. Magazines for the young present themselves in manifold shapes—of Boys' Journals, and English Girls' Journals, and Child's Own Magazines. We have every variety of Temperance Advocates, and so earnest is proselytism in this direction that

we have an Anti-tobacco Journal. The Religious Tract Society has five Penny Periodicals, and the Christian Knowledge Society has also its cheap organs of amusement and instruction. These divide the market with a shoal of Half-penny and Penny Weeklies, which have acquired the name of Kitchen Literature. This name is, with some injustice, exclusively applied to these delights of the Servants'-hall; for their unnatural incidents and their slip-slop writing may be traced in the literature for the parlour. Some who are fashionable and popular have arrived at such a pitch of exaggeration, that no form of writing that is plain and simple is judged fit to stir the minds of masculine girls and effeminate lads. In a remarkable French book, published in 1840, "Les Classes Dangereuses," the writer laments over the "immondices" of the popular literature of Paris. In another ten years or more, there were amongst ourselves too many cheap publications which went upon the principle that the Penny Readers would like something low. They found their error, and in the endeavour to be moral contrived for a long while to be preternaturally silly. I rejoice to find it asserted that the aggregate weekly sale of immoral publications is now estimated at no more than nine thousand copies, whilst three years ago their circulation was estimated at fifty-two thousand.* The unnatural style of the penny literature—the three sorts of style "provided for imbecility," described by Johnson as the bombastic, the affected, and the weak,—will gradually give place to attempts to rival the higher ability which now

* Publishers' Circular, May 16, 1864.

marks the cheap Numbers, and almost equally cheap Monthly Magazines, which are avowedly conducted by writers of the first eminence, or by other editors whose names are no secret in the community of letters.

I have intimated that some of the faults of taste, which characterise the humblest species of periodical literature, have penetrated into those regions where authorship is better paid for, and may therefore be presumed to be of a higher quality. But there are faults of a less pardonable nature in the writer of fiction, than a total ignorance of the habits of good society, or a total incapacity to touch the subjects, or to reflect the style, that mark the discourse of educated persons. The grosser evils of the attractive reading that may be purchased for a penny in every street of London have spread, as an epidemic spreads from the hovel to the mansion. The current demand for "sensation novels," to be provided for the Circulating Libraries at half a guinea a volume, has been absolutely generated by the weekly sheets that commanded a sale by suiting their contents to the palates which demanded the coarsest dishes highly seasoned. The diseased taste, which appears to be now common to the sanded kitchen and the carpeted drawing room, has been stimulated by the same class of writers. They have seen that the incessant whirl of the social machine produces an influence upon most domestic circles, which demands a continued excitement in the hours of leisure. The newspaper, exciting as it is, is not enough. In a sensation novel of the genuine sort, are to be found a pleasant distillation of the topics that daily present themselves in the

records of the criminal courts and police offices, all so softened down and made easy to juvenile capacities, that murders, forgeries, burglaries, arson, breach of trust, adulteries, seductions, elopements, appear the common incidents of an English household. It is not the taste for horrors that characterised a former age of sensation novels, when murders and ghosts always went together. Crime is not now an exceptional thing, but the normal condition of common life. The dramatists before Shakspere dabbled in blood. There are violent deaths in abundance even in Shakspere. But he saw how the vulgar element could be raised into grandeur by the poetical; how crime could be taken out of the region of horrors, by being surrounded by those accessories which belong to love and pity. There are writers of novels amongst us who deal with "sensation" incidents in that higher spirit. But the number of those who grossly administer to a corrupt taste seems increasing.

> "England! the time is come when thou shouldst wean
> Thy heart from its emasculating food."

There is an Appendix to the English Catalogue which exhibits what are termed "Collections, Libraries, Series, etc." It includes those published from 1835 to 1863. Nearly all the leading publishers appear to have engaged, during this period of twenty-eight years, in a species of publication in which Constable led the way. We have four Library Series of Bentley, one of Standard Novels; cheap editions of celebrated publications, by Blackwood. We have eleven Libraries and Series issued by Bohn—Antiquarian; British Classics, Cheap Series; Classical Library; Ecclesiastical Library; English Gentleman's

Library,—Extra Volumes (not Ladies' reading); Historical Library; Illustrated Library; Philological and Philosophical Library: Scientific Library; and Standard Library. It cannot be doubted that many of Mr. Bohn's volumes, which may be counted by hundreds, have brought books of authority, whose scarcity or high price precluded their general circulation, within the reach of the great body of readers. William and Robert Chambers, with whose useful labours during more than thirty years the world is well acquainted, have their Educational Series, their Library for Young People, and their People's Edition. Chapman and Hall have their Standard Editions of Popular Authors, in which we find the works of W. H. Ainsworth, Mrs. Gaskell, Miss Mulock, Thackeray, and Trollope. Murray's Family Library of eighty separate books is still in demand. His Home and Colonial Library, his Railway Reading, and his British Classics, of later date, hold their place amongst the books that have not a mere ephemeral popularity. Knight takes his place as a publisher of the Library of Entertaining Knowledge; of Classics; of Journey-books; of Library for the Times; of Weekly and Monthly Volumes. Longmans have Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia of 132 volumes, now issued at a reduced rate, as the collections of many other publishers have been reduced, to meet the pressure of new competition. They have the more modern series of the Traveller's Library, comprising about 150 books. The Parlour Library, chiefly of novels, good, bad, and indifferent, comprises about 300 separate books. The Religious Tract Society has an extensive series of volumes, not professedly religious, in which it is very difficult to see what is

the difference between their adopted children and the best of their secular competitors. The same may be said of the general publications of the Christian Knowledge Society. Routledge has Collections and Libraries almost bewildering from their extent:—American Poets; Books for the Country; British Poets; Cheap Series, of 269 Works; Railway Library, of 327 Works,—amongst which we find Bulwer's Novels, purchased at what was deemed an extravagant price for the right of re-printing, but the value of which concession was better estimated by the publisher than by his critics. Routledge gives us another series of Standard Novels; and by way of a "half-pennyworth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack," we have the Useful Library. Smith, Elder, and Company have their Shilling Series of Standard Works of Fiction. I conclude this enumeration with Weale's Rudimentary Series, which comprises 144 works, chiefly on scientific subjects.

In the first volume of my Weekly Series, published in 1844, I said, "The literary returns of the United Kingdom in 1743, were unquestionably little more than 100,000*l.* per annum. What has multiplied them twenty-fold? Is it the contraction or the widening of the market—the exclusion or the diffusion of knowledge? The whole course of our literature has been that of a gradual and certain spread from the few to the many—from a luxury to a necessary—as much so as the spread of the cotton or the silk trade." What may be the literary returns of the United Kingdom twenty years later I will not presume to calculate. The 2,000,000*l.* of 1844 might be guessed as 4,000,000*l.* in 1864, without any great violation of probability. The sale of books, so largely

increased during these twenty years, has been concurrent with the vast increase in the means of distribution. The railway stations, not only adapted for the sale of books, but for their more general diffusion upon the principle of the circulating libraries; the more frequent intercourse of the country districts with the towns, where new books, especially the cheaper ones, may be purchased; the rapid conveyance of the country bookseller's parcel, which formerly came lagging once a week, and in many cases, is now daily; and last, though not least in importance, the facilities of the book-post—all have contributed to this great change. There are still those who lament over this general diffusion of knowledge, and say that it will extinguish the race of original writers. In the second chapter of this Volume I have enumerated some of those who had then taken their rank in the honourable roll of English literature. Let me enumerate a few of those—and I mean to draw no invidious distinctions with regard to many whom I omit—who have subsequently inscribed their names upon tablets that may be durable as brass, or perishable as wax, when another generation or two rise up to believe in them as we still believe in Pope or Fielding, or to dismiss them to oblivion, as we have dismissed Hayley or Pratt.

The names of modern writers, especially those whom I have known, given by me in the second chapter of this Volume, had reference to their position in my "Half Hours with the Best Authors." Robert Browning and his wife (then Elizabeth Barrett) were not included in that collection; but I cannot pass them over here without doing injustice to him who is in many respects the most distin-

guished rival of Tennyson, and to her "who gave a double immortality to the name of Browning." The novels of Disraeli are also not found in my selection. They still preserve their popularity, and I am not quite sure that he might not have attained a more durable reputation as a writer, than that which will rest upon his brilliant success as an orator.

The new poets of this epoch have scarcely yet achieved such a position as those who took their places earlier and still hold them. The novelists have been pressing forward with surprising vigour to compete for such honours as have been showered upon Dickens and Thackeray. Amongst the most remarkable is Wilkie Collins. He had begun to write works of fiction when I was brought into most pleasant intercourse with him in our Guild progresses. Though his talent was undoubted, it never occurred to me that the author of "Basil," and of "Hide and Seek," would have achieved such a position as he has acquired by "The Woman in White." It is not the plot or the style which constitutes the fascination of this book. It is the full possession of that power, which is the chief charm of Richardson to those who have patience to make their way through his involved stories—the power of throwing down, as it were, a hundred incidents which appear to be perfectly unconnected, and gradually gathering them together to produce the circumstantial or cumulative evidence which removes the veil from a great mystery. The incidents were "like a tangled chain, nothing impaired, but all disordered." He gathers them up, and then all is symmetrical. This is to possess the legal mind in one of its most remarkable qualities, which, after all, is essentially dependent upon the imagi-

native faculty, whether in a lawyer or a novelist. Anthony Trollope is to many a pleasanter writer than Thackeray, because his views of society are less caustic. If the painters in water-colours had not of late years made a great stride in equalling the force of colour in the painters in oil, I might say that Trollope is a water-colour follower of Thackeray. This opinion has reference more to the general features of social life which he presents than to his incidents or his characters. He chiefly deals with the upper middle class, and here we find a good-natured presentation of the quiet tenour of that life which is characteristic of so great a number of the English people—nothing very brilliant, but nothing revolting; little wit, but no vulgarity; quiet occupation, with some frivolity; women mostly well informed and amiable, with an occasional touch of the insipid. His collegiate clergymen are master-pieces of a great portrait-painter.

No one who is familiar with the more recent writers of fiction, will hesitate to place Charles Kingsley amongst the highest in purpose and in tone, and Shirley Brooks in a class far above that of mediocrity. But I pass them by, to glance at that remarkable band of female novelists—the amazonian army of letters—who are not only well-qualified to fight by the side of the best of the male writers of fiction, but to win victories of themselves, and carry off the highest spoils. Elizabeth Gaskell was a worthy successor in the work begun by Harriet Martineau, of making the rich and the poor more clearly understand their mutual relations, and of bringing the great industrial classes into which society is divided—the capitalist and the labourer—into a better comprehension of each other's

actions and motives. Miss Martineau had to establish certain principles of political economy, and she had to illustrate them by showing their actual working in common life. Mrs. Gaskell lived amidst our greatest manufacturing population; and out of her perfect acquaintance with their feelings, habits, and prejudices, with a rare command of the provincial dialect, she produced a marked effect by her "Mary Barton." In her desire to awaken our minds to the old oppressions, the ignorance, and the sufferings of the factory-workers, she exhibited a picture which would not be a faithful one if taken at the present day. In "North and South" she has dealt more equally between the conflicting parties, and has shown how the tendencies of the age have been to bring them closer together in mutual interest, and mutual respect. Although the general tendency of the writings of Mr. Dickens is to unite classes in feelings of a common brotherhood, I have sometimes thought that he bore too hardly upon those who held that the great truths of political economy,—even if worked out in a right spirit, which regarded the distribution of wealth to be as important as its accumulation,—were not an insufficient foundation for the improvement of society. Before I published in 1854 my volume of "Knowledge is Power," I sent a copy to my eminent friend with somewhat of apprehension, for he was then publishing his "Hard Times." I said I was afraid that he would set me down as a cold-hearted political economist. His reply of the 30th of January, 1854, was very characteristic; and I venture to extract it, as it not only may correct some erroneous notions as to his opinions on such subjects, but proclaims a great truth, which has

perhaps not been sufficiently attended to by some of the dreary and dogmatic professors of what has been called the *dismal science*:—"My satire is against those who see figures and averages, and nothing else—the representatives of the wickedest and most enormous vice of this time—the men who, through long years to come, will do more to damage the really useful truths of political economy, than I could do (if I tried) in my whole life—the addled heads who would take the average of cold in the Crimea during twelve months, as a reason for clothing a soldier in nankeen on a night when he would be frozen to death in fur—and who would comfort the labourer in travelling twelve miles a-day to and from his work, by telling him that the average distance of one inhabited place from another on the whole area of England, is not more than four miles. Bah! what have you to do with these!"

Charlotte Brontë came upon the world in 1848 as a great surprise. Her "Jane Eyre" took the reading public by storm. She had adventured before upon an experiment of her capacity to produce what would sell, by submitting the manuscript of "The Professor" to that publishing experience which is not infallible. In a fortunate hour for her speedy success Mr. Thackeray appreciated the real power that belonged to this young woman—child-like in her figure, and simple as a child in her demeanour. I have heard Miss Martineau relate that when she met Currer Bell by appointment, after being doubtful, as most were, whether the name was that of a man or a woman, the modest authoress placed herself upon a low stool by her side, and looked up to her with a sort of timid admiration. It was the homage of one

quite unused to companionship with her intellectual equals. Had she not died at a comparatively early age, it is probable that the crude, eccentric, and morbid tone of thought, which denoted seclusion from the world operating upon latent disease, would have become a healthier manifestation of great and original genius. In a year after the publication of "Jane Eyre," Dinah Mulock appeared as a novelist. Her reputation has been steadily growing; never impaired by extravagant incidents or rash opinions. Her pictures of social life, as exhibited in the career of a Writer to the Signet, and a Manufacturer who had fought his way out of the slough of poverty, are as truthful as they are vigorous. "The Head of the Family," and "John Halifax, Gentleman," will hold their place when many flashy productions have had their little hour of popularity, and are then no more seen. One more I must mention, who in some of the highest intellectual qualities,—in knowledge extensive as it is accurate; in power of delineating character, whether of the educated or uneducated classes; in picturesque description—has no equal amongst her own sex, and very few amongst the other sex. Under the assumed name of "George Eliot" appeared five years ago "Adam Bede." This production placed the writer, who could draw the little Methody and Mrs. Poyser, in the same rank of portrait-painters as the great masters of a past age, who produced Parson Adams and Dr. Primrose. "Silas Marner" is another example of such rare delineations, as vigorous as they are truthful. "Romola" is in a grander style—in many respects wonderful, but certainly not so interesting as subjects belonging to more recent times, and more familiar

scenes. But all have been produced out of the same close observation, the same ability to seize upon the picturesque in art or in nature, and, above all, the same humour—that quality which can only be traced in writers of the highest mark.

Fiction now occupies so large a share of the commerce of literature that I may be excused for having almost exclusively dwelt upon the novel-writers, as the most prominent amongst the present race of distinguished authors. It will scarcely be necessary for me to attempt more than a brief mention of a few amongst the many who, since my notice in the previous pages of this volume, have most commanded the public attention.

It appeared like a heresy when John Ruskin, in 1843, entered the lists of Art-criticism with a sort of challenge to all comers. "Modern Painters, their superiority in the Art of Landscape-painting to all the ancient Masters," was a bold proclamation for a graduate of Oxford, twenty-four years of age. Characterised by equal self-reliance was his "Lamps of Architecture," which appeared six years later. But the mere assertion of peculiar opinions would not have secured Mr. Ruskin his great reputation, had it not been accompanied by a power of eloquent and picturesque writing, of which very few of his contemporaries, in any forms of composition, have an equal command. He unquestionably lifted Art-criticism out of the region of pedantic rules, and caused many to think that Reynolds did exceeding well when he turned his deafest ear to the art-critics of his time:

> "When they talk'd of their Raphaels, Correggios, and stuff,
> He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff."

Mr. Ruskin has a host of disciples, and possibly also an equal number of unbelievers in him. So it is with another of our most original thinkers, in a very different walk. John Stuart Mill has, to a great extent, revolutionised our political economy. He has done, upon scientific principles, what writers of fiction have been labouring, not unworthily, to accomplish by one-sided pictures of individual suffering from the unequal distribution of wealth. Mr. Mill has indicated the way by which the claims of capital and labour, too long conflicting, may be ultimately reconciled, by the participation of those who ostensibly are non-capitalists in the profits of well-directed labour. A survey of the present state of industrial society amongst us, compared with what it was even ten years ago, will show the strides that have been making, under disadvantageous circumstances, by direct co-operation, and by that modified form of the same principle, which is now so familiar to us as Limited Liability. The old race of Political Economists—with one of the most acute and orthodox of their leaders—Mr. M'Culloch—are distinctly opposed to these innovations, once considered so chimerical, and now, in their realization, held to be so dangerous.

The Historians are a numerous band. In Ancient History, Thirlwall, by his eloquent style and felicity of illustration, is deservedly popular; Grote, by his unswerving determination to work out the importance of the democratic principle in the most intellectual community of the Old World, has thoroughly routed the old believers in Mitford's aristocratic views, if any such remain. The writers of Modern History have, for the most part, devoted themselves to special

periods of our own or of foreign annals. Macauley's great work, unprecedented in popularity, is essentially a history of the expulsion of the Stuarts. Mr. Froude's History of England from the Fall of Wolsey, is essentially a history of the growth and progress of Protestantism amongst us. The genius of the writer, his beauty of style, his vivid descriptions, have concealed what to many appear his one-sided estimate of character, and his paradoxical assertion of principles upon which subjects may be drilled into loyalty, and the adverse elements of a State made compact and firm by the pressure of authority. But with these possible defects, it cannot be denied that Mr. Froude has attained a mastery over facts imperfectly known, and has rendered them more interesting by lucid arrangement and picturesque description. I should occupy too much of this very imperfect sketch of our current literature, if I were to make the briefest mention of the authors of the semi-historical works, which take the shape of Biographies, political, literary, or artistical.

It must not be inferred that the few eminent writers I have mentioned, are representatives of the numerous departments of knowledge which give its continued and increasing activity to the Book-trade of this country. As a Note to this chapter, I subjoin an estimate made by me, upon data furnished by the "London Catalogue," 1816 to 1851, and the "Annual Catalogue" of 1853, of the number of new books published, and the nature of the subjects which they embraced. The books on Divinity were more than four-tenths of the entire number of new publications; those of Law and Medicine were one-tenth thereof; Science, Arts, and Industry, two-tenths; school-books

and juvenile books, one-tenth. Thus eight-tenths of the whole publications of a given period are not the sort of reading which constitutes what is called Popular Literature—the Literature of Book Clubs, Circulating Libraries, and Collections. History, Biography, Travels, Novels, and Poetry, furnish the ordinary Miscellaneous Reading of our population. There are works in the class of Divinity, such as Dr. Milman's Ecclesiastical Histories, which really belong to the general Literature which no educated reader can neglect. There are works of Science, such as those of Sir Charles Lyell and Hugh Miller in Geology, which have some of the fascination of what is ordinarily termed light reading. Sir John Herschel's "Discourses on the Study of Natural Philosophy" is a model for writers who desire to present Science in the most attractive garb. There is no want of the more nourishing aliment, as well as the most palatable, which the modern Press offers to unvitiated appetites.

NOTE TO CHAPTER IX.

[EXTRACT FROM "THE MODERN PRESS," 1854.]

"THE London Catalogue of Books published in Great Britain, 1816 to 1851," furnishes, in its alphabetical list, with "sizes, prices, and publishers' names," that insight into the character and extent of the literature of a generation which we cannot derive from any other source.

Every book in this "London Catalogue" occupies a single line. There are 72 lines in a page; there are 626 pages. It follows that the Catalogue contains the titles of 45,072 books. In these 36 years, then, there was an average annual publication of 1252 books. This number is more than double the average of the period from 1800 to 1827. There is also published, by the proprietor of "The London Catalogue," an Annual Catalogue of New Books. From two of these catalogues we derive the following comparative results for the beginning and the end of a quarter of a century:—

1828.	New publications	842
1853.	,, ...	2530
1828.	Total number of volumes	1105
1853.	,, ...	2934

1828.	Total cost of one set of the new publications	£668	10	0
1853.	,, ,, ,,	1058	17	9
1828.	Average price of each new work . .	0	16	0
1853.	,, ,, ,, ...	0	8	4½
1828.	Average price per volume of the new publications	0	12	1
1853.	,, ,, ,, ...	0	7	2½

Such calculations are not arrived at without the labour of many hours; but the labour is not ill-bestowed by us, for they afford better data for opinion than loose talk about the

number, quality, and price of books. Hence we learn, that, in 1853, there were three times as many books published as in 1828; that the comparative increase in the number of volumes was not so great, showing that of the new books more single volumes were published; that the total cost of one set of the new publications had increased by more than one-half of the former cost; that the average price of each new work had been reduced nearly one-half; and that the average price per volume had fallen about 5*s.* below the price of 1828. A further analysis of this Annual List shows that, of the 2530 books published in 1853, only 287 were published at a guinea and upwards; and that of these only 206 were books of general information; while 28 were law-books, and 53 of the well-accustomed dear class of guinea-and-a-half novels. Decidedly the Quarto Dynasty had died out.

As a supplement to the "London Catalogue, 1816-1851," there is published a "Classified Index." Through this we are enabled to estimate in round numbers the sort of books which the people were buying, or reading, or neglecting, in these 36 years. We find that they were invited to purchase in the following proportion of classes:—

Works on divinity		10,300
History and geography		4,900
Fiction		3,500
Foreign languages and school-books		4,000
Drama and poetry		3,400
Juvenile books		2,900
Medical		2,500
Biography		1,850
Law		1,850
Science.—Zoology	500	
,, Botany	700	
,, Chemistry	170	
,, Geology	280	
,, Mathematics	350	
,, Astronomy	150	
,, Natural philosophy	300	
		2,450
Carried forward		37,650

Brought forward		37,650
Arts, &c.—Antiquities	350	
,, Architecture	500	
,, Fine arts	450	
,, Games and sports	300	
,, Illustrated works	500	
,, Music	220	
,, Genealogy and heraldry	140	
		2,460
Industry.—Mechanics, &c.	500	
,, Agriculture	250	
,, Trade and commerce	600	
,, Political economy, statistics	700	
,, Military	300	
		2,350
Moral Sciences.—Philology, &c.	350	
,, Education	300	
,, Moral philosophy	300	
,, Morals	250	
,, Domestic economy	200	
		1,400
Miscellaneous (so classed)		1,400
		45,260

CHAPTER X.

THAT division of each decennial Census which relates to the Occupations of the People, has always appeared to me the most complete as well as minute exhibition of their social condition which is to be found in any statistical document bearing upon national progress, whether domestic or foreign. My curiosity has often been excited to know more than I could find in these significant figures; to see something of the inner life of masses of the population, whether large or small, of whose characters and habits we know little or nothing. There are many handicrafts, for example, which are found only in particular localities and nowhere else. Thus at Christchurch in Hampshire, the minute steel chains for the interior of watches are made by women. The links and rivets are furnished from Sheffield and Birmingham. Look at the little chain in your watch which you wind up every night; you can hardly see the rivets, and yet, as I am assured, these female artisans of Christchurch rarely wear glasses. It would be worth a visit to this town, not only to look upon its noble church, but to see how the patient diligence of the watch-chain makers can attain to perfection in a branch of industry which demands the most exquisite nicety of manipulation. How many of the curious operations of handicraft I should desire to examine

if "stealing age" had not "caught me in his clutch." The interesting description by M. Audiganne, in a recent number of the "Revue des Deux Mondes," might once have induced me to make a trip to the Jura Mountains to look at the domestic manufacture of turnery, known as articles of Saint Claude, which has existed for centuries. Here the snuff-boxes which once employed the labour of the district have given place to the briar-root pipes. England is the greatest importer of these pipes, next to the United States. Do many of our youths who display their genuine briar-root on the top of an omnibus, know where these pipes are made; or consider that when they paid five shillings for a warranted article, the cottager who is producing it sits for twelve hours a day at his lathe, turning out dozens for the reward of two or three francs?

The official Report on the Census of 1851 had told me that "straw-plait, lace, and shoes, employ the people in the South Midland Counties." These non-factory employments had commanded little attention from statists and tourists; but it appeared to me that there must be some points of interest connected with them, especially in calling forth a large amount of female industry. I wanted in 1860 relaxation from my habitual pursuits, and I sought it in a little tour of twelve days. By a regulated activity, uniting the speed of the railway with the moderate pace of the wheeled-carriage and the occasional walk, I was enabled to obtain some acquaintance with the Straw-plait manufacture, as carried on at St. Alban's, at Luton, at Dunstable; with the Boot and Shoe-trade, as pursued in Northamptonshire, and at Cookham; with the Pillow-lace handicraft, in its organized

industry round Bedford and Northampton, spreading through the Valley of the Ouse, and long seated on the banks of the Thames. I also saw, what were in some respects to me more novel, the Wooden-Ware and Chair-making trades, employing some thousands of the people amidst towns and villages of Buckinghamshire, which lie between the hills crowned with the beech-woods from which the county derives its name. I had that real holiday, in which body and mind are employed without exhaustion in a constant change of scene, and of varied observation.

On a bright frosty morning in the middle of October, the North-Western Railway bore me in an hour and a quarter to St. Alban's. Time, and the changes of society, cannot obliterate the noble associations of this famous spot. To this place, suggesting thoughts of memorable persons and events, I came to inquire into the occupations and habits of a new population of straw-plaiters and bonnet-makers, who, after the lapse of three hundred and fifty years, have succeeded to those who received their dole at the great Abbey gates. These new comers have settled here within a very recent period, and by their industry have restored some life to the thoroughfare which railways had rendered a deserted street of shut-up inns. And yet, unpoetical and humble as such an inquiry may seem, it is perhaps more important to the interests of the country that a large female population, profitably employed, should present the example of a virtuous and happy community, than that the Abbey should become a cathedral, and a new bishop here hold his seat, as some desire. I should rejoice to see the grand old pile restored in a worthy manner; but I should more rejoice to know

that some judicious efforts were made to rescue a disproportionate female population, generally earning sufficient even for luxuries, from the perils that beset young women congregated in workshops, and living for the most part without the restraints and comforts of domestic ties. Here, as at other straw-plaiting towns, cottages have been run up, in which female inmates are accommodated, who have come from village homes, attracted by the reports of high wages that would allow cottage girls to dress like ladies. It was evident that something was wanting to control such a class, beyond the ordinary religious instruction of a Sunday.

Luton is a town whose recent importance has been wholly created by the straw-plait trade. Boswell, who went with Johnson in 1781 to Luton Hoo, the mansion of Lord Bute, on the 4th of June, the birthday of George III., says, "we dined, and drank his Majesty's health at an inn in the village of Luton." "The village" has become the metropolis of a great trade.

The straw-plait market of Luton is held on every Monday throughout the year, at eight o'clock from Lady-day to Michaelmas, at nine from Michaelmas to Lady-day. It had been described to me as a scene combining many features of the picturesque, such as a painter would delight in if he beheld it on a bright summer morning, when the crowds from the country would hilariously display the golden plait on stalls set out from one end to the other of a long street, and cheerful matrons and smart lasses would stand quietly on the pavement, each with their scores of plait hooped on their arms. It was my misfortune to see this assemblage on a morning when the rain

came down with a settled determination that destroyed all the gaiety of the scene. Nevertheless the street was crowded with sellers and buyers, and every gateway that could give shelter was filled with the poor women who brought their week's work to a certain market. All the curious organization of the trade could be here followed out. At nine o'clock the market-bell rings, and the traffic begins. My attention is first attracted by the dealers in straw prepared for plaiting. These come from the neighbouring hamlets, in which they are employed in the selection of straw from the farmers' barns; in sorting it into different degrees of fineness; in cutting it into a regulated length; in bleaching it by exposure to sulphur-fumes; and in making it up for sale in little bundles. The straw-plaiters come to the market to buy this straw; as they also come to sell their plait. Those women whose goods have not been collected by a middle-man stand in rank, their small dealings being principally confined to the private makers of bonnets at their own homes, who chaffer with the plaiters for a score or two of the plait. Carts have come in from distant places with loads of plait. The dealers are opening their bags upon the stalls. The commodity will sustain no material damage from the rain; and so the trade goes forward as if all were sunshine. The buyers here are the agents of the great houses. They rapidly decide upon quality and price; enter the bargain in their note-books; the bags are carried to the warehouses; the loaded tressels are soon relieved of their burdens; and in an hour or two the street is empty. The scene reminds one of Defoe's description of the cloth-market of Leeds at the beginning of the last century,

when the High Street was covered with a temporary counter, to which the clothiers from the country came each with his piece of cloth, rarely with more; and the business was settled between the producers and the cloth-factors after very few words. A straw-plait manufactory employs no straw-plaiters within its walls. There are large warehouses in which every variety of plait is kept in spacious receptacles —English plait and foreign plait; dyed plait, and plait called "rice," the white inner part of the straw being worked outwards. The variety of degrees of skilled labour is manifest in these productions. I was shown a bundle of plait of the most exquisite fineness, worked by a dame of eighty; as well as the commonest plait worked by very young girls, who sit at their cottage doors in the sunny days, or wander about the green lanes, playing as it were with their pretty work. The bonnet-sewing and hat-sewing process is exhibited in spacious rooms, in each of which sixty or eighty young women are busily plying the needle.

Straw-plait industry has an authenticated date for its origin—the reign of George I. Lace-making, we all know, is as old as the time of Shakspere, and probably a good deal older. In 1782, Cowper described the lace-maker,—

> "Yon cottager, who weaves at her own door,
> Pillow and bobbins all her little store,
> Content, though mean, and cheerful, if not gay,
> Shuffling her threads about the live-long day,
> Just earns a scanty pittance, and at night
> Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light."

Then, as now, the lace-maker just earned a "scanty pittance." The poet drew a picture with which he

was perfectly familiar, for he lived in the heart of the Buckinghamshire Lace-making district for many years. In his summer rambles from Olney to Weston, he might see many a cottager weaving at her own door, and in his winter morning walk might bestow a kind word upon the aged dame still fumbling at her bobbins over a scanty fire. Wherever the Ouse flowed through the well-watered land from Huntingdon to Buckingham, by Bedford and by Newport, there was the lace-maker. She dwelt also in every hamlet that dotted the fertile country between the Nen and the Welland. There she still dwells, earning even a scantier pittance than of old; but she has not died out. The surplus female labour of the peasant's household still adds a trifle to his scanty means, even in the commoner work of the pillow and bobbin. If there be an occasional lace-maker who, in "shuffling her threads about the live-long day," is unusually skilful, she may probably earn her own food and raiment. The lace-machine absolutely forbids any rivalry of hand-labour as to cheapness; but it has not shut out a competition in excellence. In these districts, the great lace marts are Bedford and Northampton.

Leaving the merchants of lace in the towns, let me look a little at the hamlets, in which dwell the workers of lace. Through a fertile country, now much inundated by the autumn rains, I arrived at Turvey, a village of farm-labourers and lace-makers. Come hither ye capitalists who suffer the labourers' cottages on your highly rented farms to afford imperfect shelter from the elements, and no provision for comfort and decency—ye who want your outlay upon better dwellings to be returned by an absolute five per

cent.—come ye hither, and look what has been done by two landowners, who were desirous to leave the world better than they found it. There is probably no such pattern village in England as this of Turvey Its cottages are newly built of stone, each containing four rooms, with out-houses and a good garden, of which the rent is fifteen pence a week. The church, one of the most beautiful examples of Early English, with many splendid monuments, has been restored in the highest taste by the munificent expenditure of the chief proprietor. The noble organ, provided by this gentleman, is played upon by himself; and here he has formed a choir of no common excellence. For the education and intellectual advancement of a population not much exceeding a thousand, there are Schools and there are Reading-rooms. This is, indeed, the Paradise of lace-makers. Although their earnings may be scant, their comforts are not few, and their opportunities of intellectual recreation after their tedious labours are abundantly provided for. Their health is well cared for by sanitary arrangements. In an inquiry, in 1850, into the desirableness of applying the Public Health Act to a town in Buckinghamshire, where many lace-makers dwelt, the dirt was as striking as the poverty; and their pallid looks were as attributable to the want of an adequate supply of water and good drainage as to their sedentary occupation. At Turvey there is the sedentary occupation, but there is also every means afforded of health, comfort, and cheerfulness. The people are cared for.

Olney, the large village which derives its only interest from having been the abode of Cowper, presents a somewhat mournful contrast to Turvey. Its long

street of old houses, still looking fresh, because built of calcareous yellow stone,—though some bear the date of two centuries,—has one unvarying aspect of dulness, if not of gloom. The tall red-brick house in which Cowper wrote 'The Task,' stands in a roomy angle of the street, towering most unpicturesquely above its neighbours. It is now divided into three separate tenements. The place and its associations are very little changed since the days when the postman's horn was heard as he came at night over the long bridge that bestrode the wintry flood,—

> "News from all nations lumbering at his back."

"The Times," indeed, is in the head inn by noon, to which hostelry the commercial traveller occasionally comes. The lace-makers may be now and then seen, bartering their painful labours at the chandler's-shop, which supplies them with thread, and gives ounces of tea for yards of lace. The lace-collector comes to purchase what the chandler has in store, and he sells it at a profit to the lace-merchant. There is little chance for the producer under such a system of truck and middle-men. The people are all poor; the parish-rates very high. I doubted if the 10,487 lace-makers of Buckinghamshire, and the 5,734 of Bedfordshire, enumerated in the census of 1851, now sing the 'Lace Songs' that "the free maids who weave their thread with bones" of old did chant. I fear that Miss Baker, whose "Glossary" contains so many interesting traces of past times, is speaking of customs that were passing away at the beginning of the century, when she says of 'Lace Songs'—the jingling rhymes sung by young girls while engaged at their lace-pillows—"the movement of the bobbins is timed

by the modulation of the tune, which excites them to regularity and cheerfulness; and it is a pleasing picture, in passing through a rural village, to see them, in warm sunny weather, seated outside their cottage-doors, or seeking the shade of a neighbouring tree, where in cheerful groups they unite in singing their rude and simple rhymes." Miss Baker gives one ditty, descriptive of the occupation:—

> "Nineteen long lines being over my down,*
> The faster I work it'll shorten my score;
> But if I do play it'll stick to a stay;
> So heigh-ho! little fingers, and twank it away."

The little fingers must move faster and longer than in the old times to earn a meal. And yet there are many who regret that these domestic occupations are perishing, and believe that the girls of a well-regulated cotton-factory are wretched beings in comparison with those who work in the sun at cottage-doors. Would that the condition of the lace-makers could be improved! Individual benevolence may occasionally pay a better price for their labour than the village factor pays; but their ordinary rate of payment must depend upon the proportion of the workers to the demand for their work. There is some chance for them in the diminished competition produced by the small rate of reward. I was told in a lace-making village that the old women only continue at the work, and that the young ones would not take it up. The skilled labourers will be better remunerated when the unskilled are withdrawn from the market.

Leaving the lace district of Olney, the rail from

* "Once down the parchment is called a *down*."

Wolverton takes me into the beautiful district of the Chilterns, with their immemorial beech-woods, in old times impassable except to the banditti hidden in their recesses; and who, we may presume, are now eradicated, and kept from again appearing by the watchfulness of Queen Victoria, who is constantly appointing her Stewards of the Chiltern Hundreds, whose duty it is to protect the lieges from lawless rapine. These are the woods amidst which John Hampden dwelt; and through the chalky hollows of the high grounds, and through the grassy valleys, he led his sturdy yeomen to the fatal Chalgrove Field. Amidst these beechen hills dwelt Waller and Burke; Milton commenced his "Paradise Regained" at Chalfont St. Giles; Algernon Sidney sat in Parliament for Amersham. The country is as beautiful as its associations are inspiriting. A steep ascent from Berkhampstead through the woods of Ashridge; a level road for a mile or two; and then appears a little town in the valley of the Chess. Chesham is the seat of a curious manufacture; and here I stop to talk of Wooden Ware. Shoemakers are here in considerable numbers; straw-plaiters are here, and lace-makers; chair-makers are here; but the distinctive characteristic of the busy town, with an increasing population, is the production of every variety of utensil that can be formed out of the indigenous growth of the neighbourhood, the beech, the elm, and the ash.

The wise Launce, in "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," tells us of an olden time when princes and princesses, as well as shopkeepers and ale-wives, would have been wholesale customers for such ware, as Chesham, we may presume, produced in the

Tudor days: "I was sent to deliver him (his dog) as a present to Mistress Silvia, from my master; and I came no sooner into the dining-room, but he steps me to her trencher, and steals her capon's leg." The pewter plate banished the trencher, and the ware of Staffordshire banished the pewter plate. But there is ever a renaissance going on in the appliances of civilization. In "The Northumberland Household Book" of the year 1512, the order of breakfast for my lord and my lady directs, "Furst a Loif of Brede in Trenchors."

We have returned to the service of bread upon a trencher, and Chesham manufactures the article in great abundance. But the Chesham trencher is somewhat of the roughest. The elaborate carvings that we see upon the bread-trenchers in the London shops are not the work of the Buckinghamshire artists. Some few women, indeed, carve wheat-ears on the rims, but the resemblance is not very perfect. The poor toy-maker, in "The Cricket on the Hearth," who desired to pinch Boxer's tail, having an order for a barking dog, and wishing to go as close to natur' as he could for sixpence, might be an example to the fair carvers of Chesham. They are great, however, in butter-prints, but the general product of the place can scarcely be deemed ornamental or very finished, if we except that of one considerable manufactory for cricket-bats and stumps. In a dozen or more yards, with sheds appurtenant, on the banks of the Chess, are the beech and the elm sawn and fashioned into articles fit for hard work and rough usage. Here is the beechen bowl, turned in the simplest of lathes; the unornamented utensil varying in size from the tiny bowl to hold the change

in the tradesman's till, to the large bowl for washing crockery in the housemaid's pantry. The beechen bowl filled with furmety for the sheep-shearing festival is no longer wanted. Here are manufactured loads of malt-shovels, which I saw ready packed for immediate use now the barley-crop is gathered; and here are produced the hundred-thousands of sand-shovels with which young happy navvies of either sex construct their mountains and their rivers on our sea-girt margins, and which tools annually perish, unless the careful nursemaid packs them up with the umbrellas, to return again to these pleasant diggings at another season of happiness in no-lessons and unstinted shrimps. Here are butchers'-trays produced in constantly increasing numbers, whatever be the dearness of butcher's meat; and here are myriads of trundling-hoops, pleasant to behold, being far less dangerous to the shins of the unwary walker on the pavement, than the noisy iron circles of this iron age. The horticultural juvenile may here find ample choice of wooden rollers, garden-rakes, and dwarfish wheelbarrows, whilst the straw-bonnet-maker may here purchase her blocks, and the wig-maker the wooden head upon which to fashion his curls that rival nature. All this varied product is handicraft. There is a sawing-mill on the stream, but in every yard there is a saw-pit, as if man wanted no aid from mechanical invention, even in the heaviest of his work. The lathe could not be spared; but it is such a lathe as Robinson Crusoe could have made to produce the furniture of his hut, without any great exercise of his ingenuity. In all this manufacture it is to be regretted that there is a very slight display of taste. In the industry of Chesham might

be reared skilful carvers, if any pains were taken to furnish them with good models. If high art were not commercially required, the women and children who cut butter-prints, might employ their leisure in carving toys, that might approach to the neatness, if not to the beauty, of the white-wood toys which the peasants of the Tyrol carve during their winter evenings. In this manufacture, as well as in many others, England is behind other nations, by aiming more exclusively at cheap than at tasteful productions.

Chipping Wycombe, known as High Wycombe, is in the very heart of the Buckinghamshire woods. Beech, the sacred tree of the Romans, out of which the sacrificial cup was made, had come to be called the "Buckinghamshire weed." In old Fuller's time, beech was held to be of value for timber, when no oak was to be had. As long as the oak lasted, the beech was safe from the woodman's axe for all purposes of housebuilding. It was still safe when the pine, "hewn on Norwegian hills," came to us in shiploads; and still more safe when our North American colonies sent us their deals by millions of feet. In a happy hour, the people dwelling amidst the beech-woods of the Chilterns took to chair-making, and so vigorously pursued the occupation that the Buckinghamshire weed is becoming scarce, as the oak was becoming scarce in the seventeenth century. It is remarkable how suddenly manufactures are localised under favourable circumstances. Chairs were no doubt always made in these districts. The Windsor chair has a fame of some antiquity; but the Wycombe chair-making trade was scarcely known as something remarkable twenty or thirty years ago. The demand for these chairs has grown with the enormous in-

crease of general population; the facilities of communication with the metropolis; the rapidly extending demand of our colonies. "When I began the trade," said a large manufacturer to me, "I loaded a cart and travelled to Luton. All there was prosperous. There was a scramble for my chairs, and when I came home I laid my receipts on my table, and said to my wife, 'You never saw so much money before.'" This manufacturer now sends his chairs to London, Liverpool, and Manchester; to Australia, New Zealand, and Constantinople. He made eight thousand chairs for the Crystal Palace, and being a person of true English humour, rejoices to tell how he took his family to a Crystal Palace music festival, and asked the attendants where they got so many chairs of one pattern, which seemed to him one of the greatest wonders of the place. Another manufacturer provided two thousand five hundred chairs, of unusual strength, for the evening service at St. Paul's.

But it is not the large contract which makes the great chair-trade of Wycombe and the neighbourhood. Let us bear in mind the immense improvement in the social habits of the British people, marking the universal progress of refinement, and consider the consequent number of houses with rentals varying from 10*l.* to 50*l.*, whose tenants require useful furniture, at once cheap, lasting, and ornamental. We need not then be surprised that Wycombe boasts of making a chair a minute all the year round—chairs which would not be unsightly in the handsomest sitting-room, and which can be sold at five shillings each. More costly chairs are here produced, as well as the commonest rush-bottom

chair of the old cottage-pattern. But the light caned chair, stained to imitate rosewood, or of the bright natural colour of the birch, and highly polished, finds a demand throughout the kingdom—a demand which might appear fabulous to those who have not reflected upon the extent to which a thriving industrious people create a national wealth which gives an impulse to every occupation, and fills every dwelling with comforts and elegancies of which our forefathers never dreamt. The wondrous cheapness of the Wycombe chair is produced by the division of labour in every manufactory, and by the competition amongst the manufacturers, in a trade where a small capital and careful organization will soon reward the humblest enterprise. "I can turn out thirty dozen chairs a day," said the worthy man who occasionally carried a few dozen in a cart to Luton market when he started in business.

It is easy to understand how straw-plait and lace-making established their chief seats amidst an agricultural population, where the superfluous labour of women might eke out the support of the husbandman's family. So also, the natural produce of an extensive district of beech-woods created the manufactures of wooden-ware and chairs in Buckinghamshire, as the woods of the weald of Sussex supplied two centuries ago the fuel for its iron-smelting. But how *shoemaking*, as a large manufacture, should have fixed its seat in particular districts or towns is not so easy to refer to natural causes. Accidental circumstances may have originally led to the establishment of such a trade, to be largely developed by capital, and skilful organization. I will give an example.

The term manufacture, as applied to the Boot and Shoe trade, belongs to recent times. The only notion of a shoemaker, whether in London or in the country, was that his entire handicraft was confined to individual customers of either sex; that he undertook to fit every foot, which task he endeavoured to accomplish by careful admeasurement; that he employed a few men and women, who worked either in his shop or in their houses; that he would occasionally have a *misfit* or two on his hands, but that he kept no stock ready for chance customers. The biographies of literary shoemakers give us no other idea of the trade, which they have rendered more illustrious than its patron, St. Crispin. Robert Bloomfield leaves his labours of Farmer's Boy to go to London to learn shoemaking of his brother George; and in a garret where five men worked, he was permitted to acquire some knowledge of the gentle craft as a reward for fetching the dinners from the cook's-shop, and for reading the newspaper to the workmen as they sewed and hammered. William Gifford, apprenticed to a shoemaker at Ashburton, had a harsh master, who did not approve of the unhappy lad's mode of employing his time—that of hammering scraps of leather smooth, and working mathematical problems on them with a blunt awl. Yet in those days, when the particular Last for the individual foot made the shoemaker's prosperity depend on small returns with large profits, there were two places where shoemaking was the staple trade—Stafford and Northampton. The cordwainers of Northampton were famous centuries ago. The greatest impulse in these days to the shoe trade of Northampton and Northamptonshire is the rapid increase of the popu-

lation of the country, the profitable intercourse with its colonies, and the existence of shoe-shops in every street of London, in every provincial town, and in almost every village. The greater portion of the shoes and boots worn throughout the Queen's dominions are ready-made.

Before I went to Northampton to inquire into the condition of this trade, I had a notion of the general organization of the manufacture upon a large scale in a neighbourhood with which I was familiar. At Cookham, there has been established for some twenty years a boot and shoe wholesale trade, which has a reputation in the gold-diggings of Australia as well as in the villages of Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. As the traveller passes through these villages, he will frequently see a board displayed over the door of the general dealer's shop, inscribed "Cookham Shoes." At the regular shoe warehouse he will ask in vain for this commodity. The dealer is the agent of the manufacturer. I went to Cookham for a few weeks in 1857, and I found that the agricultural population of Cookham, and of the neighbourhood for some miles round, had become, to a considerable extent, a shoemaking population. When I walked in the lanes leading to Cookham Dene I always met a young fellow bearing a canvas bag filled with materials for shoes, or the shoes completed. On the Buckinghamshire side of the Thames, where none but paper-makers used to dwell, again I met the shoemaker with his bag. On the Cookham Moor, as I looked upon some not unskilful cricketers, I was told that the wonderful bowler was a shoemaker. In the harvest time, when hands were wanting, the shoemaker was reaping, and the shoemaker's wife was binding

the sheaves. This mixture of labour is common enough in the United States. The growth of this trade is remarkable. Mr. Burrows, who had acquired a competence as a leather-seller, retired here, having bought a handsome house and grounds. As he went about, he saw the poor cobblers in the villages pursuing their craft after a rough old fashion, and rearing their boys in the same unskilfulness. He proposed to bring from London a skilled artisan or two, who might labour with them; and, taking their boys apprentices, work up the materials with which he would furnish them. What was originally an amusement and a benevolent gratification became a source of considerable profit. The retired leather-seller had sons of an active turn; and thus gradually a trade grew up, which now employs not much less than a thousand men, women, and children.

Boot and shoe making is the staple trade of Northampton—the trade which maintains the fine old town in a more flourishing condition than would belong to it as the centre of a great agricultural district. "Squires and spires," the old characteristics of the county, still hold their proper rank; but the Last is the symbol of its commercial prosperity. No one who goes round one of the great shoe factories of Northampton can fail to be struck with the extent of this trade. Here are to be seen vast stores of boots and shoes of every variety. Heaps of soldiers' shoes are here ready to be delivered upon government contracts; made with the best materials, and, as I was informed, subject to the test of the severest examination. Women's shoes and boots of every description of workmanship are here to be found; from the plainest strong boot for an English

winter, to the light boot of embroidered morocco for the fair ones who take some exercise under East Indian skies. The thick-soled high-lows for the walk over the stubble or the ascent of the mountain, are here on manifold shelves, whose number is matched by the varnished boots for the soft tread of the drawing-room. The examination of these stores leads me to desire some knowledge how they are produced so abundantly and so cheaply. I see the first process of cutting out the leather; and I watch the next process of putting together all the materials necessary for producing a complete boot or shoe, to be taken away to be completed by domestic manufacture. The union of the sole to the upper leather is the work of the legion of shoemakers who dwell in the town and neighbourhood. It is the same organization that I saw at Cookham, and which prevails universally. But I also saw here a different mode of proceeding, which has not yet universally obtained. The upper leather is sewn in the factory, and the sewing dispenses with the usual binding, which employed so many women and children. But to sew so many thousands of upper leathers as are here given out weekly would employ many hundreds of the class described as "shoemaker's wife." Do they here work apart from their husbands? The mystery is solved, when I am taken into a long room, and there see fifty or sixty young women working at the Sewing-machine, and earning each three or four times as much as by the old hand-labour. The skill with which the material was directed in its course to be united by self-acting needles was as admirable as the perfection of the machine itself.

The Sewing-machine in operation, which to me

was a novel sight in 1860, has now become familiar to many persons through its almost universal use. A recent paper in the 'Times' on Sewing-machines, has probably startled a considerable number of those who look with alarm upon every abridgment of manual labour. The writer says, "While Hood was composing 'The Song of the Shirt,' and painting with the tints of despair the poor sempstress, slaving in her garret, a mechanic, almost equally poverty-stricken, was working out, in an American garret, the means of her emancipation." Elias Howe, a native of Massachusetts, was unquestionably the inventor of the Sewing-machine, whatever improvements may have been made upon it. It is asserted in the article to which I refer, that the Sewing-machine has everywhere improved, instead of lowering, the wages of needle-women. Nearly all the shirt-making and collar-making of London is now done by the machine, at wages four times as great as could be earned by Hood's sempstress. The largest operations in this branch of industry are carried on in workshops. The demand for workers is so great, that it furnishes a proof that machinery has the inevitable tendency to create increased employment, however its first introduction may derange the ordinary operations of labour. Of course the common organization of Trades' Unions has been called out to resist the introduction of the Sewing-machine. This is only one of those temporary obstacles to the general use of any labour-saving machine, which at first appear difficult to overcome, but very soon pass away into the obsolete mass of vulgar errors. Even violence ultimately recedes before the quiet force of argument, especially when it is felt to be disinterested.

When I went to Northampton, the introduction of the Sewing-machine into the Shoe-trade had been very recent. There was a formidable organization against it amongst the shoe-makers of 1859. A working-man of a neighbouring town, in that year, in a pamphlet on Strikes and Trades' Unions, gave some preliminary remarks on the Machine question. He tells us that in Northamptonshire and Staffordshire there was an implacable spirit of animosity displayed towards "the stabbing-machine," as the new invention was termed by its opponents; that the operative boot and shoe-makers, to the number of several hundreds, left the town, rather than submit to what they deemed to be tyranny and injustice on the part of the masters. They were urged, he says, to this rash and inconsiderate resolve by the language of the few leaders, whose ignorance was only surpassed by the violence of their assertions. I deviated from my way to visit Kettering, for the sole purpose of making the acquaintance of this sensible and truly courageous man, who had been led attentively to consider such questions by a combination against his brother of the Kettering branch of the Northamptonshire Boot and Shoe-makers' Mutual Protection Society. He wrote a tract on the Freedom of Labour, in which he said, "A working man myself, I have experienced the hard and bitter trials which but too often induce us to eat the bread of charity. One of the rights which I claim for myself and my brethren is the absolute freedom of labour, in every state whatever." I consider that my tour of 1860 would have been amply repaid if it had afforded me no other pleasure than that of making the acquaintance of John Plummer.

I have mentioned what I saw of the Sewing-machine at Northampton, in its application to what may be called Factory-work, but I was then informed by a dealer in the machines, that a few provident shoemakers were purchasing them for the domestic employment of their families, by which one female of their household would be able to earn more than was formerly earned by the wife and two or three daughters. But there was something far beyond this pecuniary advantage. The wife would be at liberty, by working a few hours at the machine, to have leisure for her domestic duties, and would thus obviate the reproach attached to too many shoemaker's wives, that the dirty home, the slatternly habits, and the neglected children, drove the husband to the public-house. The article in the 'Times,' which is the evident result of careful observation, shows what salutary effects the Sewing-machine is producing, of which I only saw the commencement four years ago. In proof of the benefit which the trade of Northampton has received from the machine, it is stated that the work of the boot and shoe maker is there better remunerated than at any other place. "In the town of Northampton and the surrounding villages the machines are in the hands of the workmen, and in every cottage their cheerful click is to be heard." The writer very justly says, "The employment of home-labour versus factory-labour is a large question, involving considerations, moral, sanitary, and industrial; but it is thought by many that the balance of advantage to all parties where the use of the Sewing-machine is concerned, is in favour of the home-labour."

My excursion in 1860 to obtain some new facts

regarding localised handicrafts necessarily takes a very limited view of the industry of this country. It is not within the purpose of this book to record facts that lie beyond the range of my own experience. In 1828, I saw some of the grander workings of Capital and Labour in the great manufacturing towns which I then visited, and I have indicated several of their most striking aspects in my second volume. Nor is it within my present purpose to enter upon a consideration of the necessity of a more enlarged education of the operative classes, when we still hear language repeated which was heard on every side in 1859, when the leaders that drove forward the ruinous strike of the Builders, exclaimed, "If Political Economy is against us, then we are against Political Economy." Birkbeck Schools, admirable as they are, have naturally no very marked influence upon the general opinions of the great masses of the industrial population; and yet some of the unreflecting opposition of working men to receiving into their minds the elementary truths which in themselves are so simple, but yet involve such great results, seems to be yielding to kind and patient endeavours to interest as well as instruct. Mr. Solly, whose labours in the establishment of Working Men's Clubs appear to be as successful as they have been arduous, in recommending the formation of Discussion Classes upon topics not political or sectarian in their nature, says, "If there was a discussion on strikes, or capital and labour, some of the members would, gradually perhaps, be induced to attend a regular class for instruction in political economy; whereas, if they were asked at the outset to join such a class, they would never consent; but if they

once attended such classes, they would discover that political economists were not striving to enforce laws of their own or of anybody's making, but simply seeking to interpret the laws of God." In the Birkbeck Schools, the instruction is of such a nature that the individual scholar is gradually gathering a course of practical lessons for his conduct as a member of a large community. He goes forth into the world, and although his opportunities of making converts amongst the improvident and the dissipated may not be very large, his conversation and his example gradually produce a good beyond what he has derived from his own education. Writing of these Schools in 1859, I said: "Propose to an uneducated youth to inform him on the theories which are held to regulate 'The Wealth of Nations,' and you appear to be leading him to a knowledge which, like a knowledge of Law, is for him to respect and obey rather than to learn and practise. But propose to him that he should obtain, by your teaching, a mastery of facts and principles which are the true foundation of his personal good in the industrial relations of life, and he will quickly come to perceive that in the proportion in which *all* have a knowledge of Political Economy, as units of society, will also result that welfare of millions, which we term 'the Wealth of Nations.'"

CHAPTER XI.

THE material and social aspects of London, in its wondrous growth during the reign of the present Queen, are constantly changing, presenting new combinations of form and colour, like the fragments of the kaleidoscope shaken together into new figures. At the London of 1844 I gave a few rapid glances (Vol. II. Chapter 13). There were remarkable opportunities for observing the London of 1862, and of deriving from the observations of strangers from our own country districts, and of foreigners of every nation, those impressions which familiarity is too apt to veil from our notice. That was the year of the Second Great Industrial Exhibition, when the Metropolis was alive not only with unwonted gatherings of our own population from the most distant parts of the three kingdoms; with dwellers in every region of our Colonial Empire; but with men of commerce from all lands, who came to compare our industrial labours with their own. Foreign workmen were with us in unusual numbers, and to those, especially, from France, our Prime Minister desired that it might be said that there ought to be emulation, but no jealousy, between the productive industries of both countries. But there was a class of foreign visitors, who, if they were less numerous than the foreign capitalists and operatives, had far more influence in forming the judgment of the world

upon what they saw in England. The Men of Letters came here to criticise and to teach. The French Journalists, whose mission was to describe the Exhibition of 1862, have left some curious and not uninstructive observations upon our outer life, of which they might correctly note the salient points, and of our inner life, of which they could really know little or nothing. Let me endeavour to note something of the general characteristics of the various classes of visitors who were filling our streets and our public places, from the 1st of May till the 1st of November, in the year when Queen Victoria completed a quarter of a century of her reign. It was a remarkable year. A year of mourning and a year of banquets. A year in which Europe was at peace, whilst America was drunk with the excitement of Civil War. A year in which the wonders of International Industry were spread forth for universal admiration, whilst the machines of the greatest industrial district of the world were lying idle, and the workmen of the now silent factories were starving for lack of the material upon which to work.

In the "Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science" for 1862, it is stated that at the Metropolitan Meeting held in the Guildhall of the City a larger number of members was present than on any previous occasion, and that the attendance of foreigners was numerous. These Transactions record that on Saturday, June 7th, a Soirée of the Members of the Association and their friends was held in the Palace at Westminster, when "Westminster Hall, St. Stephen's Hall, the Central Hall, the Houses of Lords and Commons, and the corridors were thrown open, and a spectacle was pre-

sented, more especially in the great Hall, illuminated for the occasion, which will probably never be forgotten by any who witnessed it." Certainly the spectacle was one which I cannot readily forget. The sober record of the Transactions of the Association may justify the higher colouring with which I described it a few months afterwards. "To see Westminster Hall lighted up more brilliantly than at the Coronation of George the Fourth—to be able to trace, as clearly as if it were in the glory of a noonday sun, every carving of that matchless roof—to move amidst hundreds of fair women without impediment from train or crinoline—to hear some blooming student of her country's history ask, Is this the place where King Charles was tried? Was Richard the Second here deposed? Then to wander through the gorgeous corridors of Parliament—to touch the Speaker's chair in the House of Commons—to gaze upon the throne in the House of Lords—this spectacle was a surprise to many a visitor, and not without its lessons to all. The genius of the Constitution was here enshrined; and Public Opinion, all powerful though irresponsible, held high festival in the seats where the spirit of Feudality once reigned absolute, to be succeeded by the more unclean spirit of Party—both finally to be vanquished when the popular voice could be fairly heard, and the welfare of the many should triumph over the interests of the few."

On this occasion, I was conversing in the Hall with Mr. Thoms—known to Peers as their Deputy Librarian, and to Men of Letters as the learned and ingenious Editor of "Notes and Queries"—when I heard a well-known voice behind me, and almost

immediately felt a friendly hand upon my shoulder. It was Lord Brougham. Though his face was furrowed, there was something like the old lustre in his eyes, and the smile that has so often told of the kindliness that was as natural as the power of sarcasm still lingered about his mouth. After a little talk he went on. Either Mr. Thoms or I exclaimed, "What changes that man has witnessed!" There was no change more remarkable than that which was connected with his appearance in this Hall as President of an Association for the Promotion of Social Science. For what were the departments of the so-called Social Science over which he had been that day watching? Two of the most important were that of Jurisprudence, and that of Punishment and Reformation. There were discussions going forward on a Minister of Justice, and on Statute Law Consolidation; on Magisterial Procedure; on the Law of Master and Servant. There were discussions on the Convict System; on Prison Discipline; on the Reformatory Movement; on the Non-Imprisonment of Children. When Henry Brougham first paced Westminster Hall in 1808, Eldon was Chancellor. The mere mention of that name is sufficient to show the differences that half a century had produced. To have talked about a sweeping reform of the Criminal Law would have been utterly vain, when the all-powerful Chancellor was shedding prophetic tears over the fallen Constitution, because the Legislature thought that a man ought not to be hanged for stealing in a dwelling-house to the value of five shillings. Then to have talked about the Convict System as any other than a very easy mode of dispensing with any nice distinctions about secondary

punishments, would have been as fruitless as to have argued that free settlers in a Colony might probably thrive better if they were not surrounded with a legion of miscreants. To speak of the Reformatory System would have been met by the common answer, "What's bred in the bone will never come out of the flesh." Ragged Schools for street vagabonds would have been thought even a more Utopian dream than that all the people should be taught to read and write. The amazement of the old race of legislators, amongst whom Henry Brougham uttered his Maiden Speech in 1810, would have merged in ridicule, had he then dreamed that the time would come when a self-elected pseudo-Parliament would meet in London, after five previous years of peregrination to Birmingham, Liverpool, Bradford, Glasgow, and Dublin, to project and to discuss how to make the world better than they found it. More startling would have been the prediction that, to learn and to instruct, there would come from a country where the State was perpetually interfering with Charitable and Philanthropic Institutions, eminent men to form part of the "Congrès International de Bienfaisance," in which the condition of the City-Arab of London and the gamin of Paris would have been set forth by competent observers, and discussed with the object how to best clean away the slough of these social wounds.

Macaulay, nearly forty years before the time we are describing, wrote in the Quarterly Magazine, "This is the age of Societies. There is scarcely one Englishman in ten who has not belonged to some Association for distributing books, or for prosecuting them; for sending invalids to the hospital, or beggars to the treadmill; for giving plate to the rich, or

blankets to the poor." In 1823 the age had made a very small advance in manifesting the power of the principle of Association, compared with 1862. In the May of every year the Metropolis is crowded with religious and moral philanthropists, who may be seen struggling day by day at the entrances of Exeter Hall, eager to obtain seats near the platform. The additional attraction of the Great Exhibition doubled these usual crowds. When the foreigner had sufficient knowledge of our language to understand the placards on the walls, and the advertisements in the newspapers, he might conceive that England was intent upon exhibiting herself in her most amiable aspect, for the wonder or edification of those who came from other lands to look upon her. Surely he might think, all this agitation for benevolent purposes—for the relief of distress, for education, for religious instruction—cannot always be going on. Once a year the people were to be stimulated into philanthropy: at other times the wretched would have no advocates for their relief, the ignorant no pleaders for their better teaching. A closer acquaintance with the every-day working of English Society, in town or in country, would show him that this aspect of London was not exceptional. He would, perhaps, believe in time—even if he had gone to sleep under the drowsy voice of Exeter Hall, or had felt no stirring of his spirit at its boisterous harangues—even if he had been taken to one of those festive but not hilarious Meetings for charitable purposes, which are perhaps more vapid than the noonday speechifications—that all these exhibitions grew out of that social condition in which public opinion was all-paramount. In looking upon these institutions, he might learn

that nothing would be successful which ran counter to the feelings of any class sufficiently prominent to be appealed to; and that for any large object connected with the real work of social improvement, all classes generally agreed to compromise the prejudices of station or habit.

M. Esquiros, a writer in the "Révue des Deux Mondes," described with great animation, a very peculiar aspect of the principle of Association amongst the unfashionable orders of pleasure-seekers. In giving a picture of the route to the Exhibition, he says "The most curious amongst the vehicles are immense *chars-à-banc*—pleasure-vans. One or two amateurs, mounted on the coach-box, sound a horn, or blow, till they become blue, on other instruments of brass, to charm the hours of the journey; whilst all the party, men and women huddled together, express by a thousand shades of countenance the various emotions of joy and surprise at the sight of this theatre of streets, where the passers-by are at once spectators and actors." Had he beheld on the 15th of August, a cavalcade of pleasure-vans and of every variety of humble vehicles, down to the donkey-cart, his curiosity might have been excited to learn something of the meaning of this extraordinary procession in another direction—to the Crystal Palace of Sydenham. It was the Fête day of "The Most Ancient Order of Foresters." Eighty thousand persons, men, women, and children,—the members of this illustrious Order belonging to London and its neighbourhood, with their wives and children—displayed on that day an example of the spirit of Association in the English people altogether extraordinary. If he had been told that the Foresters

are one of many Secret Societies, he might have been carried back to thoughts of the Fehm Gericht, and other terrible fraternities of the Middle Ages: of the Illuminati, who spread such terror in Europe before the French Revolution. These Foresters are amongst the most harmless and honest fraternities, who have no object whatever but to relieve each other's necessities, upon the principle of independence, asking no aid from the rich, no patronage from the great. One of the most curious and valuable contributions to the statistics of England and Wales is the Annual Report of Mr. Tidd Pratt, the Registrar of Friendly Societies. This intelligent officer has the duty of examining and certifying the Rules of Friendly Societies, and also any alteration of their Rules, and further to digest into an abstract the names and addresses of the several Societies, the funds of each, and its number of members, according to the Returns which their officers submit to the proper authority. The aggregate amount of their funds may, without exaggeration, be called enormous. Mr. Tidd Pratt says, "The great antiquity of these funds for self-help is a proof that they meet the spirit of this people in every age. The changes that have of late years followed a more enlightened legislation evidence their desire to keep pace with the growing intelligence of the country." Mr. Pratt explains that the first societies established under the Friendly Societies' Acts were merely Benefit Clubs; that of late years some have been formed into Orders, or Societies to which only the initiated have admission, in imitation of the Freemasons. In my own boyhood, I remember people laughing at the follies of the free and easy drinking clubs, known as Lodges

of Druids and Odd Fellows; and I fancied that I should like to see the interior of those wonderful rooms, in which thriving shop-keepers wore grotesque robes, and the listeners outside could hear the mimic thunder with which the candidate for initiation was to be alarmed. Probably these absurdities are given up amongst the Secret Friendly Societies of sixty years later; for, whether called the Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows, The Ancient Order of Foresters, The Ancient Order of Shepherds, The Ancient Order of Romans, The Ancient Order of Druids, or by half-a-dozen other queer titles, they have in their Lodges business to perform which requires prudent and vigilant administrators, and sober members, having an earnest purpose to accomplish. These, and all other Benefit Societies, are Associations whose first object is to shield each other from destitution during sickness. They also provide for the burial of their members. Amongst the "Orders" that are classed as Secret, each single Society comprises the Order, manages its own affairs, pays its own sick members, as well as funeral expenses, but is repaid by a levy made over the whole districts in which various Lodges of the same Order are included. By patient calculation many of the interesting details connected with these Orders might be obtained from the Registrar's Report. They are digested into a valuable article in the "Quarterly Review" for October, 1864, from which we learn that the Manchester Unity, established in nearly every part of the British dominions, contains 358,556 members, whose annual contributions are above 350,000*l.*, and their reserved capital estimated at nearly two millions sterling. The Ancient Order of Foresters, which is next in im-

portance, comprises above 250,000 members. The Manchester Unity is strongest in Lancashire, the Foresters in Middlesex.

Three millions of working men have spontaneously organized themselves into these Benefit Societies. They represent an aggregate of one-third of the entire population of these kingdoms. But they have never arrogated to themselves the exclusive title of *The People.* Did the French workmen, who came to England in 1862, believe that they were the sole representatives of The People of France? They have never wanted instructors in that belief. M. Texier, a French Journalist, could not see the English People as he looked around him:—"One would say, that the *people* do not exist in this immense city of London, and that it is exclusively inhabited by nobles and the middle class; the same uniformity of costume, habits, manners, visages . . . This, in my opinion, seems to be the true reason why London looks so sad in French eyes. When you walk through these streets, in the midst of omnibuses and carriages, among this population which encumbers the squares, the bridges, the public walks, you cannot at first explain why all that meets your eye—splendid equipages, glittering shops, buildings, and public—all look dull. It is only when you seek to solve the singular problem, you find out what makes London so monotonous, apart from its industrial and commercial sphere, is the absence of the *people*—of the *people* who are everywhere in Paris, who animate and make gay the streets and squares, the public gardens and the Boulevards, who are seated at our theatres, who mingle in all our ceremonies, and who hold a prominent place in all our public *fêtes.*" Wonder-

ful power of the *blouse!* Might not a better sort of equality be indicated by the fact, that the English workman, when he holds "a prominent place in all our public fêtes," has no distinctive dress?

One of the correspondents of the French journals discovered that the English were much improved, not in reality, but in the art of concealing their sullenness, taciturnity, and selfishness. They answer civilly to questions put to them by strangers, and they complacently go out of their way to show the enquirer which way he should go. Another writer describes London as much changed since 1851, principally as regards manners and sentiments. When Frenchmen came to London in 1851, their long beards excited universal astonishment. London has adopted the French beards, so that the last Exhibition produced a revolution in English visages. Another says, the ladies have shaken off the old pride and the old toilet, for the wardrobe of England is renewed from top to toe. But there is something in our streets more remarkable to the reflective Frenchman than beards and crinolines, than the over crowded thoroughfares, or the general absence of architectural grandeur or regularity. He has come from a city where everything is regulated and regimented, and he is wonderstruck by the absence of authority in everything that occurs in London. Traversing the immense metropolis, there were not ten soldiers to be seen by an observer who saw and admired the one functionary who watched over his safety, saving him from annoyance and even danger—the benevolent policeman. At the raising of his hand the disasters were at once prevented which would have resulted from an agglomeration of car-

riages. "In this great city the citizen is king, but he is, above all, the servant of the law." One of the French journalists, M. Sherer, is earnest upon this theme, in common with most of the higher intellects of France:—"Elsewhere, regulations are the rule; elsewhere liberty exists only where it is expressly stipulated; but in England it is liberty which is everywhere, and always supposed. Elsewhere civil life is encircled by a network, invisible but inextricable, of restrictions; but in England every man speaks, teaches, prints, meets, associates, builds, travels, exercises his calling in industry and commerce, fills the professions, carries out all his designs, without hindrance from anything whatever but the equal right of his neighbour. For the truth of what we say we fearlessly appeal to all who have crossed the channel. They may find England monotonous; its climate sombre, its towns ugly, its inhabitants stiff, its institutions Gothic; they may grumble and find fault as much as they please; but there is one thing they cannot deny, and that is, that it is in England the man who loves liberty can breathe most freely." But it was not every French Journalist who looked so complacently upon the surface of society, beneath which there is something that indicates the real character of the people. Some of these Newspaper Correspondents were equally dissatisfied whether they saw the Londoners serious or frolicsome. One gentleman, finding the shops, the theatres, and the casinos shut on Sundays, exclaims, "It is a country of savages!" Another goes to Epsom on the Derby-day. He cannot understand its wondrous excitement. He calls the return to London a perilous journey; its practical jokes savage

and brutal. The philosophical M. Bosquet writes, "I like England too much to join her flatterers. These see in such manners of other times the maintenance of the national character. I see in them the persistence of barbarism; the remnant of the ancient grossness of feudal, or simply of aristocratic, manners, when it was necessary to give the people, not examples, but amusements."

There were large classes of strangers in London besides those who came to visit the International Exhibition. There was an Agricultural Show in Battersea Park—a show of unexampled magnitude and interest. Never before were got together such a vast collection of horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, and machinery, sent from every district of the United Kingdom, and from neighbouring countries of Europe. The competition showed how England had gone ahead since Sir Robert Peel, on the memorable night of 1846 when he destroyed the principle of Protection for Agriculture, exclaimed to the House of Commons, "Choose your motto, Advance, or Recede." At this Exhibition it would have been very difficult for the critic who attaches so much importance to the costume of the people, to distinguish the Peer from the Yeoman. He would observe two men of florid faces and stalwart limbs, pointing out to each other the beauty of that Shorthorn, or the novelty of that Drill. The one might be the lord of thousands of acres—the other the tenant who farms two hundred, but has learnt that he cannot keep pace with the richer capitalist unless he regards Agriculture as a science, and as a manufacture in which skill and profit must go hand-in-hand. There were often to be seen in the various public

places of London, young soldiers clothed in every shade of green or grey, but very few lighting up the sombre aspect of our out-of-door dress with the national scarlet. These were the Volunteers. They had come from all parts of the kingdom to the Wimbledon Prize Meeting. Our critics were inclined upon the whole to look complacently upon an institution which had sprung up at a very recent date, but which, in all likelihood, will continue to be a permanent means of self-defence. "We should be surprised," writes one, "if the institution of Volunteers, after having, perhaps, suggested to the foreign spectator some of those jokes which our neighbours themselves do not spare their citizen soldiers—if, we repeat, this army, springing up, as if by enchantment, from the ranks of an industrious people, did not fill the hearts of our countrymen with a feeling of respect and admiration."

During this Exhibition year there were attractions for artists of all countries. The Gallery of the Fine Arts in the Exhibition, crowded as it was by persons of all ranks, had produced a change in the opinions of some of our foreign observers. One writer says "The French had thought too lightly that the people of London were indifferent to the beautiful." For the musical artists there were opportunities of seeing that the English are not altogether deficient in musical taste. The French journalist, whose inquiries rarely extended beyond the purlieus of Leicester Square, going to the taverns where music, and that not of the lowest caste, is provided for the entertainment of the guests, says he is reminded of the cafés chantants. The musical artists might learn from our various concerts that we were establishing some claim

to be called a musical nation. Out of this progress had grown the Amateur Performances, which would show the foreigner how England could put her whole heart into a work which was worthy of enthusiastic devotion. On the 24th of June, four thousand vocal and instrumental performers were arranged in an Orchestra in the Crystal Palace for the performance of the "Messiah." The vocalists, with a few exceptions of solo singers, were the choral bodies of our cathedrals, the members of the London Sacred Harmonic Society, and a host of other amateurs from our great manufacturing towns and marts of commerce. And these, who had daily labours to perform in their several vocations, executed on this day the well-known choruses in a way never before realized; and, on two subsequent days, exhibited such a mastery over the great composer's less familiar works, as told for the first time to our generation what a mighty genius had come to England, a poor foreigner, at one time patronized and at another persecuted, till his matchless science had triumphed over both patronage and persecution, and he had become to us a glorious household name, like the names of Shakspere and of Milton.

Let us inquire a little how this host of foreigners made their way to London, and how our own people, from the East, the West, and the North, were brought day by day to the metropolis of the South. The steam communication with France, Belgium, Holland, and the Baltic was far more certain and rapid than at any former period. In the United Kingdom there were about eleven thousand miles of railway open for traffic. The various Companies had about fifteen thousand carriages for the conveyance of passengers.

Excursion trains from town and village were organized throughout the country. It was a pleasant sight to see five hundred men and women, often with their children,—artisans and the higher orders of agricultural labourers,—turn out from the great metropolitan railway-stations, all dressed in their holiday suits. At the London-bridge station groups of foreigners might be observed gazing about them, little at their ease, before they plunged into the labyrinth that was before them. Most of the foreigners had also travelled in third-class carriages, for, whether French, German, or Dutch, they had been accustomed, upon payment of the lowest fare, to be decently accommodated. With the exception of one or two Companies, the third-class carriages of the English railways were then, as they continue to be, the disgrace of the country. And, yet, the third-class passengers have always formed no inconsiderable part of the millions who contribute to the dividends of railway shareholders. The total number of passengers of all classes in 1862 was a hundred and eighty millions. We may judge of the proportions of the various classes at that period by the later returns of the Board of Trade. Of two hundred and four millions of passengers, twenty-six millions were first class, fifty-seven millions second class, and one hundred and twenty-one millions third class. During 1863 the total receipts from first-class passengers was over three millions; from second-class over four millions; and from third-class very nearly five millions. One who has travelled a good deal in this country says, "Railway-directors and managers seem to hold it incumbent on them—a part of their traditional policy, on which not even a shadow of doubt is to be permitted for a moment to rest—to

discourage the third-class passenger traffic, as a regular part of the service. . . . . What they seem chiefly to dread is that persons who, according to their notions, *ought* to travel in the first or second class, would travel in the third, if the third were made convenient as to time, and endurable as to the vehicle." And yet this policy does not always succeed. If open carriages are provided for the summer-travel, *gentlemen* will go in them, without a fear of coming in too close a contact with humble companions. They probably find as much entertainment and instruction in the frank manners of the majority of English working-people, as in the fastidious silence of the mournful first class, where no one presumes to speak to another, if there be no previous link of personal acquaintance. Men of sense are too glad to escape from this atmosphere of exclusiveness. The accurate observer whom I have quoted says, "The casual traveller in a third-class carriage seldom fails to notice the greater urbanity and gentleness of manner observable among what railway officials would regard as third-class travellers proper, as compared with the same class ten or twenty years ago. In a great measure this is, as we believe, the result of the more frequent association in their journeys with people of a somewhat higher grade; for, despite the directors, second and even first class people *will* travel third class, even now. And, as the result of our own experience, we must say, that we have witnessed quite as much courtesy and good feeling exercised towards the well-dressed of both sexes, and listened to as shrewd and intelligent conversation in a third class carriage, as in an average first or second class. Rude, coarse, and ill-bred fellows there are sometimes,

of necessity, but even the rudest or coarsest 'rough' is subdued, if he finds himself in a light, clean, and cheerful carriage, among well-behaved and intelligent people. In a close, dark and filthy pen he takes courage, and behaves as though he were at home."*

When the stranger had arrived in London, comfortably or uncomfortably, he would, during his sojourn naturally desire to go about the great city in its public conveyances. The steam-boat on the river would be to him a constant delight. The cabs and omnibuses in the street a perpetual nuisance. There were five thousand cabs in London in 1862. In addition to the usual number of cabs, there were brought into use many of the shabbiest and dirtiest vehicles, drawn by the most wretched horses, and with drivers who seldom knew their way. The ordinary supply was not of the best order, and it would have been a very remarkable circumstance if any non-resident passenger had not been asked for double his proper fare. The policeman—the never-tiring benefactor of the stranger in London—is generally at hand to enforce something like moderation. Happy was the party of three or four who could obtain a decent cab, compared with the misery of riding in the narrow and altogether uncomfortable omnibus. In that social vehicle the foreigner would probably encounter some of the most unsocial people that London can produce, and from their demeanour on too many occasions—sitting as close as possible together, to prevent a stranger obtaining a seat;

* "Railways in their Social Relations." Article by Mr. J. Thorne, in "Companion to Almanac," 1865.

having the windows open or shut at the sole pleasure of an individual; with many other agreeable varieties of low-bred pretension,—he would perhaps be justified in coming to the conclusion that there was still a good deal of selfishness in England.

In 1862 London was just beginning to put on the aspect of a city beleaguered by powerful armies, preparing for defence. Throughout long lines of thoroughfare the foreigner would meet with obstructive sheds, and behold tons of earth accumulating under their roofs as the clay and the gravel gradually rose to the surface. He would learn that mighty works of engineering were going forward, which, in a few years, would remove from the city that pollution of its noble river which had made it a common sewer of three millions of people. He would be told that other apertures were being made, to give light and air to an underground railway beneath the crowded streets—a work almost as remarkable, and certainly more useful, than the Thames Tunnel, which had so long excited the wonder of Frenchmen. But he would only witness the very small beginnings of that system which, in 1864, has reduced London to the condition of a city in a state of siege. It has been invaded on every side by railway directors, whose motto has not been "*Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos,*" but to pull down the lowly, and if possible to spare the proud. To avoid heavy compensation, the lines of railway that are penetrating into the very heart of the town, are taken through the poorest districts. In one connecting line of the North London Railway nine hundred houses have been pulled down. There is no help, either for the workman or his employer,

when the great despot of our days asserts his prerogative. Ahab will not mourn that Naboth refuses his vineyard, for Ahab has a very powerful machinery for compelling obedience. Naboth is too weak to go to law, so Ahab gets the vineyard; and Naboth may die, not by assassination, but by the very act of being turned out of his old home. No doubt much of this is for the public good eventually, but the immediate suffering may be too intense to be mitigated by private or public benevolence; by the erection of "Dwellings for the Working-classes;" or by a Clause in Acts for the Extension of Railways within the Metropolis, that the Companies should run daily trains for labourers to stations just outside London at an extremely low rate. These incidents in the wholesale destruction of houses of commerce, and houses of humble poverty, constitute a large amount of what are really private wrongs. There are some who, like myself, may remember that there was a cottage abutting on the Pavilion at Brighton, the owner of which sturdily refused to part with it to the Prince Regent at any price. No doubt he was a churlish proprietor, but he was an example of the mode in which, amidst a good deal of public oppression, private rights could be asserted on the old principle which Chatham glorified as the highest boast of an Englishman—the inviolability of Home:—"The poorest man in his cottage may bid defiance to all the forces of the Crown. It may be frail; its roof may shake; the wind may blow through it; the storm may enter it; but *the King of England cannot enter it!*" The Railway King can. But in addition to private wrongs, let the Legislature take care that the new tyranny should inflict no

public wrongs. It must be allowed, I suppose, to make our thoroughfares hideous with its viaducts; to destroy all picturesqueness in our few models of noble architecture, by intercepting their view; but let it not be allowed to touch the unequalled open spaces of our metropolis—the parks, which, however foreigners might complain of the ugliness of our streets, they were compelled to acknowledge were in their beauty, as well as their utility, such possessions of the crown and the people as no other capital could show.

I have not attempted a description of the International Exhibition of 1862, and I have for similar reasons refrained from presenting any details of the former grand display of the Industry of all Nations. There was another English Exhibition in 1857, in one respect even more remarkable than either of these—the "Exhibition of the Art Treasures of the United Kingdom," at Manchester. That a committee of mill-owners and merchants, in our greatest manufacturing city, should have conceived the bold design of asking for the loan of the master-pieces of the private collections of the country; that they should have raised a large guarantee fund in a few weeks, and have erected a handsome building,—were not in themselves very extraordinary circumstances. The wonder and the honour were, that the appeal was instantly answered, by the highest and noblest in the land—that such a collection of the Old Masters was got together as no gallery of Europe could show, nor indeed several galleries united. There was also a gallery of British Portraits, unequalled in its extent and importance, collected by Mr. Peter Cunningham. Foreigners wondered; and

began to see that the Fine Arts were appreciated amongst us. Englishmen gloried, in this manifest symptom that the long reign of *exclusiveness* was over—that the proprietors of these "treasures" held them as trustees for mankind. One of the pleasantest sights of this exhibition was the crowd of factory-workers, who were invited to come in after two o'clock on Saturdays at a very small price. To me this Art Exhibition afforded a pleasant holiday, for I had the advantage of the taste and knowledge of my friend Mr. Thorne in viewing this unrivalled collection.

CHAPTER XII.

IN 1842, having occasion to be in attendance at the Central Criminal Court, my curiosity was excited by an unusual spectacle—that of an artist, seated amongst the city dignitaries on the bench, diligently employed in sketching two Lascars on their trial for a capital offence. What was there so remarkable in the case, in the persons, or even in the costume, of the accused, that they should be made the subject of a picture? The mystery was soon explained to me. "The Illustrated London News" had been announced for publication on the Saturday of the week in which I saw the wretched foreigners standing at the bar. I knew something about hurrying on wood-engravers for "The Penny Magazine;" but a Newspaper was an essentially different affair. How, I thought, could artists and journalists so work concurrently that the news and the appropriate illustrations should both be fresh? How could such things be managed with any approach to fidelity of representation, unless all the essential characteristics of a newspaper were sacrificed in the attempt to render it pictorial? I fancied that this rash experiment would be a failure. It proved to be such a success as could only be ensured by resolute and persevering struggles against natural difficulties.

It is not my purpose to enter upon any descrip-

tion of the means by which a drawing, of the largest size, and full of the most elaborate details, that is executed on a Wednesday, shall be engraved on a Thursday, printed off with its appropriate letter-press on a Friday, and circulated by thousands through the kingdom on a Saturday. I take "The Illustrated London News," as I shall take another remarkable production of artists and writers, as a text upon which I may offer some remarks upon such prominent social features of the time of Queen Victoria, as were thus capable of receiving a new interest for the temporary gratification of a public of universal readers. There is a higher point of view in which picture journalism may be regarded. It furnishes the most available and the most valuable materials for the historian of manners. It has been created by the revival of wood-engraving. When Bewick, about the close of the American war in 1783, had shewn the power of this neglected art as the companion of type printing, if the Journalists of that time had seen its capacity for presenting faithful and vivid images of the actors and scenes of the day—its fleeting fashions and its passing follies—what a record we should have had of memorable things lost! The pictorial humorists who succeeded Hogarth have given us some glimpses of public characters in their every-day attitudes and dress, exaggerated into the ludicrous. Gilray, Rowlandson, Cruikshank, and a few less eminent, accomplished what Addison described as the excellence of burlesque pictures,—"where the art consists in preserving, amidst distorted proportions and aggravated features, some distinguishing likeness of the person." It would probably have been unsafefor a newspaper in the time of George III.,

or even of the Regency, to have provided such portraits for the amusement of a people who have always claimed the privilege of laughing at their rulers. But if this would have been forbidden ground to a pictorial journalist of the days of Bewick, what wealth of illustration was to be found in all the aspects of common life, when there were distinctions of costume and of manners in every rank of society! How varied would have been an "Illustrated London News" before the time when all women walked in the Parks, or in Whitechapel, hooped in steel, and all men sate in the Brougham or on the knifeboard of the Omnibus in drab tunics. If the whole outward manifestations of our present social life be not monotonous, their *sober* delineation in weekly pictures is decidedly so. Look, for example, at one of the most interesting and satisfactory incidents of this generation. We have a Queen who travels, not in set progresses as Elizabeth travelled, but by railway and steam-boat to the extremest distances of the land over which she rules. "The Illustrated London News," it is said, never rose into a large circulation till it began to trace her Majesty's steps wherever she went. During the twenty years from 1842 to 1862 what endless repetitions have we had of solemn directors of the iron road bowing from the platform; of robed mayors and aldermen presenting their loyal addresses; of smart ladies waving handkerchiefs from drawing-room windows; of crowds shouting and impeding the way in narrow streets. All these pictures are alike, with a difference. The scenery is varied; the actors are the same. Sometimes we have incidents that could never have been seen by the artist—ships foundering—mines exploding. The

staple materials for the steady-going illustrator to work most attractively upon are, Court and Fashion; Civic Processions and Banquets; Political and Religious Demonstrations in crowded halls; Theatrical Novelties; Musical Meetings; Races; Reviews; Ship Launches—every scene, in short, where a crowd of great people and respectable people can be got together, but never, if possible, any exhibition of vulgar poverty. This view of Society is one-sided. We must look further for its "many coloured life." We want to behold something more than the showy make-up of the characteristics of the age. We want to see the human form beneath the drapery.

In my second Volume (p. 6) I have noticed some of the ludicrous aspects of common affairs presented by the caricatures of the period when I settled in London. With exceptions to which I have just alluded, their artists were feeble as well as coarse exponents of "the very age and body of the time." Some of them addressed the lowest tastes, after the fashion of a school which Addison has also described: "The distinguishing likeness is given in such a manner as to transform the most agreeable beauty into the most odious monster." Amidst a host of caricaturists, good, bad, and indifferent, there alighted upon this orb, in 1841, a crooked little gentleman, who has been the shrewdest observer, the most good-humoured satirist, the most inoffensive promoter of merriment, and one of the most trustworthy of portrait-painters, that ever brought the pencil to the aid of the pen, for harmless entertainment and real moral instruction. The written wit and wisdom of Mr. Punch I shall here pass by. But it appears

to me that the two decades in which I have been an admiring observer of this personage, cannot be better illustrated than by glancing at the materials which he has gathered together for a political and social history of his own times, as viewed in the broad daylight of a laughing philosophy. He has best replied to the invocation of the great moralist of the last age :—

> "Once more, Democritus, arise on earth,
> With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth.
> See motley life in modern trappings drest,
> And feed with various fools th'eternal jest."

But the ludicrous side of human affairs, as regarded by such an observer, not unfrequently suggests the serious side. Democritus and Heraclitus walk the world together.

In the July of 1841, when Master Punch first saw the light, there was a change of administration pregnant with the most important consequences. Sir Robert Peel came into power. Hercules (Peel) tearing Theseus (Russell) from the rock to which he had grown, led the way in that remarkable series of political pencillings or cartoons, which, if they have not materially influenced public opinion, have been something more than straws thrown up to show which way the wind blows. In 1842, Peel as the modern Ceres, appears with a cornucopia labelled Sliding Scale. But the mouth of the horn of plenty is downward, and is padlocked. A gaunt Britannia with a starved lion rejects the offering. A little later in the year, the minister, whose accession to power was hailed by the frogs who were dissatisfied with their log of wood, is now King Stork who is eating them up. In this year we first recognise the

representations of common life by a new artist—one who was destined to be the Hogarth of an era not so lawless and gross as that in which the great pictorial satirist flourished; but an era in which the progress of refinement had not obliterated the infinitely varied features of the "Cinthia of the Minute." The signature "J. Leech" was that of a young man totally unknown in the regular schools of art. In a few years his artistical power was as generally acknowledged as were his wonderful range of observation, and his unequalled facility of expression. In 1843, we find Leech not attempting to cover what may be called his personal satire with the cloak of the anonymous. To one of his most famous sketches, "A scene in Westminster Circus," where Brougham is clown to the ring, saying, "Now, Mr. Wellington, is there anything I can run for?" etc., there is the artist's signature. It has been truly observed of Leech's political sketches, that although personal in one sense he must be, in the other he is not. "It is always open to the political satirist to treat his subject in the spirit of the early *John Bull,* and the manner of Theodore Hook. This is what Leech never did. Private character was to him a sacred territory."* The Punch of this period makes abundant merriment with the famous ex-Chancellor. Before he was Clown in the Ring, he was Peter in Romeo and Juliet, carrying the fan before Nurse Wellington. Much of this is the reflection of the tittle-tattle of the clubs, or of the party assaults of the newspapers—all representing Lord Brougham as an intriguer for place. The calmer judgment of subsequent years

* "Saturday Review," November 5, 1864.

would have interpreted the homage of one eminent man to another as a genuine expression of private feeling. On either side there had been indications of mutual respect, which had cast aside the differences of political opinion. In the first days of Brougham's accession to power, Wellington, to the surprise of many, presented himself at the Chancellor's reception. In 1839, at the Festival of the Cinque Ports in honour of the Lord Warden, Lord Brougham was selected as the representative of two thousand guests to propose the health of the Duke. He said the choice thus made "loudly tells that on this day all personal, all political feelings are quelled, all strife of party is hushed." The speech of Lord Brougham is far from being a common-place eulogy —it is truly eloquent. The Duke of Wellington, in his reply, adverted to the opinion just expressed that there are times when all party animosities should be laid aside—"I must do my noble and learned friend the justice to say that for years and years there has been nothing of that description in social life as between him and me." I might have hesitated to have revived the remembrance of passing satire directed against one who has rendered eminent services to his country—which, within my own range of observation, I have not been slow to record—had I not felt that a long course of persevering effort to urge on the progress of improvement, eventually surmounts not only good-natured ridicule but malicious calumny. In 1858, Mr. Punch, pointing to the Temple of Fame, says (with the greatest respect), "After you, my Lord."

In 1843 another statesman appears upon the scene, who, having once rendered the most eminent services

to his nation, has come to be considered by thoughtful politicians as the great retarder of its progress. "The Irish Ogre fattening on the finest Pisintry" is a portrait of O'Connell, with his Repeal Club in his hand and his money bags of Rint at his feet, ladling his little victims into the cauldron of Agitation soup. Year after year, until his reign is over, is the great Dan presented to us in various ludicrous shapes. In 1845 he is "The Greedy Boy who cries for the Moon." He sits roaring upon nurse Peel's lap, who tries to soothe him with the Maynooth Grant, but he points to the Moon of Repeal shining through the window and cries, "I won't be aisy—I will have Repale." The prudence and sagacity of Prince Albert prevented him from being the butt of political satire. He seldom appears in the pencillings of Punch; never as being mixed up with party strifes. The grandfather of Queen Victoria had a homely claim upon the affections of his people as Farmer George; and in the same way it was no disparagement to the Consort of her Majesty that he should be represented as "Prince Albert the British Farmer."

In 1844 the Prince de Joinville published a pamphlet in which he proposed that France should build steam-vessels of war. It was described by the Duke of Wellington as "an invitation and provocation to hostilities, to be carried on in a manner such as had been disclaimed by the civilized portions of mankind." The suggestion by the son of Louis Philippe for the advantageous use of this steam-navy was, to burn our towns and to plunder our coasts. The cartoon of Leech called "The Quarrel," exhibits Master Wellington saying, "You're too good a judge to hit me

—you are," and Master Joinville replying, "Am I?" The bullying attitude of the bearded French boy with his doubled fist, and the composure of the grey-headed senior, with his hands in his breeches' pockets, are more than clever. This period gives us the portrait of "Perfidious Albion" by the same artist—the conventional John Bull sitting in his garden smoking his pipe with half-shut eyes; a foaming jug of ale upon his table; with his dog beneath enjoying his bone, regardless of the little frog who has hopped out of the bushes.

Laugh as we will, we cannot in any epoch escape from the serious side of human affairs. Law is not always Justice; the offender against the laws is not altogether out of the pale of sympathy. Leech, in 1844, presents "The Home of the Rick-burner." A wretched peasant sits in a dilapidated room, ragged, shivering, with four starving children around his knees. He looks despairingly towards the pallet upon which his wife lies dead, whilst one of the children is appealing to him for food. The demon in the background holds a lighted torch. "The Game Laws" is a sketch in which an altar is surmounted by the landowner's idol, the hare. A labourer, manacled, kneels before it, about to be sacrificed by the robed and coroneted high priest, who holds the sword of justice in his hand, labelled "According to Law." Two women with their children are slowly making their way to the Union in the distance. These two scenes are rural. "Fine or Imprisonment" is of Town life. The double-faced magistrate, with his Midas ears, smirks upon the fashionable blackguard, who stands in the box of one compartment, upon a charge of assault—"Law for the Rich

—the Fine was immediately paid." The same magistrate's face turned round frowns upon the rough prisoner in the box of another compartment—"Law for the Poor—the Prisoner not being able to pay, was removed in the Van to Prison." "The Poor Man's Friend" exhibits the great Redresser of the wrongs of Society—the beneficent visitor who "makes the odds all even." An emaciated old man lies upon his hard bed, his broken spade on the floor—"Testimonial" on the wall. The friend stands by the bedside. "Reconciliation, or As it ought to be" is a prophecy by Punch. The nobleman, uncovered, points to Poor Laws and Game Laws which he has trodden under foot. The labourer, touching his forelock with the countryman's mark of respect, tramples the bludgeon beneath his clouted shoe. The little gentleman on the ground is exhibiting the alphabet to the labourer's boy.

The year 1845 conducts us into new phases of political life. There are parliamentary symptoms that the Anti Corn-Law League has not been working in vain. "Papa Cobden taking Master Robert a Free-Trade walk," exclaims, "Do step out." The fat little boy dragged along, answers, "You know I cannot go as fast as you do." Later in the year "The Political Robin, driven by the severity of the times to seek for Grain," shows us the little bird, Peel, at the cottage door, looking up to the good child, Cobden, who has got an ear of corn in one hand and a full bag in the other. In the same spirit, Peel, the country boy, is throwing open the gate of monopoly; for "coming events cast their shadows before." But there were changes impending, which required zeal and perseverance to carry through, almost as great

as were required to effect a free trade in corn. Brougham is presented as "The Political Tinker," crying, "Any old laws to mend, or new ones to repeal?" The garb and the attitude are very undignified, but there was true dignity in the occupation, as we have long since come to acknowledge. The absorbing topic of 1845 was the Railway Mania, which brought such disasters on its victims. Crowds are rushing to the locomotive "Speculation." The widow and the wife, the parson and the soldier, the fat citizen and the cockaded footman, are here, all with their money-bags, and all cheered on by the sagacious Director to prostrate themselves before the Railway Juggernaut. The game ends in the Railway Panic of December. By the side of a wall covered with placards of the ephemeral journals that were associated with this time of general insanity, the butcher's boy meets the grocer's boy, and this dialogue ensues—"I say, Jim, vot's a Panic?"—"Blow'd if I know, but there's von to be seen in the City."

The year 1846 opened with the knowledge of the failure of the potato crop. Sir Robert Peel, unable to induce his Cabinet to agree in a large measure for removing the restrictions upon the importation of corn, resigned his office. This crisis gave us one of Leech's celebrated cartoons. Peel is going out of the door; Lord John Russell presents himself to the Queen in the character of a Page seeking the vacant situation. Her Majesty replies, "I am afraid you are not strong enough for the place, John." Peel comes back to power, and proposes to the House of Commons his plans of commercial policy. Robert Peel, baker, opens his cheap-bread shop. He stands at his shop-door in Parliament Street, calm

and confident, with his hands under his white apron, whilst the Duke of Wellington carries a placard "Down again—great fall in bread." We have then an anticipation of "The British Lion in 1850." He sits in his easy-chair, with a large loaf and a foaming jug on his table, and he puffs his cigar in happy tranquillity. The anticipation was not very wide of the reality. "Actæon worried by his own Dogs" is a type of the baiting which the great Minister had to endure before he was driven from power, "to leave a name behind him execrated by every monopolist." "Manager Peel" takes his Farewell Benefit, amidst showers of bouquets from the Boxes and the waving of hats from the Pit; whilst a policeman is holding back a rioter in the likeness of Mr. Disraeli, who doubles his fist and wants to fight the favourite actor. In this year the distress of his country incites Young Ireland to set up in "business for himself." He wants arms, and he goes to a shop where there is "A large assortment of most iligant blunderbusses," and "Pretty little pistols for pretty little children." England is a better friend to Ireland than her noisy Repealers. The starving peasant sits desolate with his famished wife and children, till John Bull comes with a basket of loaves, saying, "Here are a few things to go on with, brother, and I'll soon put you in a way to earn your own living."

In 1847, Lord Palmerston makes his first prominent appearance in the cartoons of "Punch." The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whose correspondence with France and the three great powers of the Continent had been far from amicable, is the showman of a booth, upon whose cloth are inscribed "Spanish Marriage—Horrible Treachery." "To be seen alive,

the British Lion roaring. To which is added the Confiscation of Cracow." John Bull was then not quite awake to foreign affairs. He cared little whom the Infanta of Spain married, and he was not much excited by the violation of the Treaty of Vienna. He turns his back upon the showman, and marches away with a confident air of contempt for such political trifles. He had a subject nearer at home to demand his sympathy and his money. The Irish Famine was at its height of misery. The great Agitator in vain shouted "Repeal" whilst the people were starving. "O'Connell stumped out" shows how the English feeling for the Irish distress, as reflected in the vigorous action of the Government, had put an end to the game which had been so long played. The Repeal Bat may be thrown down, and the Agitator rush away, whilst Russell, the bowler, exults in his victory.

"The Rising Generation" of this period was a new development of the genius of Leech. For how many years have we been laughing over his infinite variety of precocious boys, who would like to catch the "deuced fine girl" under the mistletoe; or sitting with old uncle after dinner, wake him out of his nap to bid him put coals on the fire and pass the wine. The youth of eighteen is as much the object of this gentle satire as the boy of ten. He drives a cab and has a tiger. He stops to talk with a friend. "Well, Charley, have you had it out with the old boy?" And Charley tells what the undutiful old governor says—"He says I must do something to get my own living." The genial reviewer of Leech in "The Saturday," characterises his schoolboys as "so fearful and wonderful in their immature inso-

lence." They belong to an age in which the feeling of respect for parents and instructors appeared to be fast passing away, into an assertion of equality which was certainly not justified by the advance of the juveniles in real knowledge. The almost total ignorance amongst the rising generation of the higher literature of their country had often been a subject of conversation between Douglas Jerrold and myself. With this indifference to serious reading came the assumption of a knowledge of the world. It is not improbable that my friend, as one of the remarkable band of associates who met once a week to discuss subjects for the forthcoming "Punch," may have suggested to the fancy of Leech some of the scenes in which the youth of England at once manifested their mental imbecility and their contempt of the old teaching of the Catechism, "To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters." Is it from the want of the antique educational discipline, whether of the home or the school, that few young men can say—

> "Parents first season us; then schoolmasters
> Deliver us to laws; they send us bound
> To rules of reason, holy messengers."

A good deal of this may have arisen from the low state of middle-class education twenty years ago. It was very little better, perhaps not so good, as the education of the poorer classes, imperfect as that was. Leech has humorously depicted the condition of the Educational question in 1847. "Between the two Stools" of Voluntary education and State education, the peasant boy comes to the ground.

1848 is ushered in by the revolution which has ejected Louis Philippe from his throne. Accord-

ing to "Punch," the armed citizen in the blouse has put out the royal light, flickering in the socket, with his extinguisher—the cap of liberty. This event called up two evil spirits in the world—the Spirit of Anarchy and the Spirit of Despotism. "Punch" has two tableaux of "the Trafalgar Square Revolution." I saw the riot in Trafalgar Square of the blackguard boys of London. They were shouting, as the legend of tableau 1 makes them shout, "Down with heaverythink." Tableau 2 shows a ringleader in the hands of a policeman blubbering out—"It aint me sir, I'm for God save the King and Rule Britannia." The 10th of April succeeds—that abortive attempt at a Chartist revolution, which showed how the improvement of the condition of the people, by a sounder commercial policy, had made them not only less turbulent, but more united for the defence of institutions which were not solely for the benefit of the great. "There is no place like Home" shows us the fat father of a family with his chubby wife surrounded by their children. He has been reading about "The State of Europe." The cartoon is encompassed by a border, in which we have wonderfully varied representations of war in all its horrors—red republicans, bearing a banner "La Propriété c'est le Vol," fighting with the French soldiery; whilst Germans and Italians are also in revolt. Martial Law has its fusillades; and a terrified king is running away leaving his crown behind him.

In 1849, the discovery of gold in California, about a year before, had attracted away many of the unquiet and dangerous spirits of our land. A legion of reckless adventurers were assembled in what were popularly called the Diggings. A new artist of

remarkable ability, Richard Doyle, is now prominent in the pages of "Punch." He presents us one of those grotesque groups for which he is famous—"A Prospect of Thomas Tyddler hys Ground—with a syghte of ye Yankees pickynge up Golde and Silvere." His peculiar genius having been manifested, he now enters upon the series entitled "Manners and Customs of ye Englyshe in 1849," as illustrations of "Mr. Pips his Diary." Amidst the grotesqueness of these representations, which went on through 1849 and a large part of 1850, the future historian of manners may find most trustworthy materials for describing our social life in the upper and middle ranks, and occasionally in the lower. I may select a few of the most remarkable.

I shall first take Mr. Pips to the seats of legislation and of law. A Committee of the House of Commons exhibits the outlines of many a well-known face, and the usual concomitants of yawners and sleepers at a dreary debate. The House of Commons is crowded; the Lords hearing Appeals exhibits the Chancellor on the Woolsack, two Peers on the benches, three Counsel at the bar, and a countryman and his wife wondering what all this can mean. Westminster Hall, showing the ceremony of opening Term, presents that periodical scene of legal pomp, with a great crowd of idlers, including a pretty sprinkling of comely damsels, Mr. Pips wisely observing "strange how women do flock to every concourse." Strange it is that they should crowd to see the Chancellor and the Judges, but more strange that they should flock to sit penned up for hours at the Old Bailey to witness "an interesting trial for murder." I pass from these constitutional gatherings to less solemn

scenes of public interest. "A Prospect of Exeter Hall —Showynge a Christian Gentleman Denouncynge ye Pope"—is a bitter satire, which, however, is not likely to put intolerance to shame. The raving orator is scarcely an exaggeration. Here we behold the dapper and the burly clerics on the platform; the excited laity shouting "Hear, Hear;" the wilderness of bonnets in the body of the hall—some of the wearers lifting up their hands in dismay at the terrible truths they hear, some weeping, but all delighted with the frantic gesticulations of the speaker. "Methinks," says Mr. Pips, "such violence do only prove that there are other bigots besides papists." Calmer is the assembly at "A Scientific Institution during ye Lecture of an eminent Savan." Science, it would seem, is more tranquillising than Theology, as popularly received. Money questions, however, touch the feelings of mankind as deeply as polemics. "A Railwaye Meetynge—Emotyon of ye Shareholderes at ye Announcemente of a Dividende of 2½d.," presents a scene which those are happy who have not witnessed, because they have abstained from engaging in such experiments. Happy, too, is the contented poor man, who has no fears of being robbed by fraudulent Directors.

"Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator."

Another sketch, equally significant of the times of 1849, presents us guests who have come to be jovial, but endeavour to look miserable. It is "A Banquet —Shewynge ye Farmer's Friend Impressynge on ye Agricultural Interest that it is ruined." The orators of Exeter Hall, and the Farmer's Friend, have perhaps equally in view "A Prospect of an Election."

It is the old scene over again which Hogarth painted a century before, but with an infinite variety of minute faces such as he rarely attempted to portray. He dealt more with individuality. In Mr. Doyle's sketch we have a countryman holding his hand behind him to receive a bribe—in Hogarth we have the more telling satire, of the honest yeoman with the partizan on either side of him dropping money into the itching palms of both his hands.

The public scenes of London life have undergone so little change, that it is scarcely necessary for me to notice St. James' Street on a Drawing-Room Day, or Hyde Park, or Kensington Gardens, or the Zoological Gardens. The Flower Shows at Chiswick have migrated to the Regent's Park and Brompton, in the hope, I may presume, that it would not rain so incessantly on the grand gala days. The Royal Academy Exhibition has been somewhat improved; for Mr. Doyle presents us with an unhappy spectator breaking his back to gaze at the pictures in the top line, where, if we may judge from the incredulous face of another gazing in the same direction whilst his friend points out something remarkable, the majority present come to the same conclusion as the wise personage in Sheridan's Critic, who exclaims "The Spanish Fleet you cannot see because it's out of sight." There is no difficulty in appreciating the correctness of the faces and figures in Madame Tussaud's Chamber of Horrors. The satisfaction of the crowd is very delightful to behold, as they look upon the effigies of celebrated murderers. The sight is almost as pleasant as a sensation novel, and sends many a spectator home with a glowing satisfaction at considering how wicked the world is, and how excellent

a thing it is to belong to the "unco guid." The polite and the vulgar are equally found in the Chamber of Horrors—whether the amusement-seekers inquire for Madame Tussaud's or Madame Toossord's. It is the same with "A Promenade Concerte," which was the rage when M. Jullien first astonished the British public with his tremendous attitudes, and gave them little beyond waltzes and polkas. He came in time to find that we could appreciate good music, and did a real service in making us better acquainted with Mendelssohn and Beethoven. For his mixed company, he still had rather too much of his sound and fury, his quadrilles and his galopes. But taken altogether, he deserved success. Vauxhall is now as much a thing of the past as in the days of Sir Roger de Coverley. In Mr. Doyle's sketches will live the waltzers not over studious of propriety, the respectable citizen and his family devouring the almost impalpable slices of ham, the gents silently sucking their sherry-cobblers, the universal smokers, the dingy waiters. It is gone —its illuminated and its dark walks, its balloons and its fireworks. We may give a sigh for the destruction of Vauxhall, but what a joy it is to have got rid of that pleasant place of diversion, Smithfield Cattle Market—its filth, its danger, its brutality. And yet for the blackguards of London it was a place of recreation. What a triumph for the human animal it was to chase a bull broken loose, to follow him into the adjacent streets and behold the terror of every passenger. These immemorial amusements, provided by the Corporation of London, have come to an end. There is scarcely any sight left but an execution before the Debtors' Door in the Old Bailey to gratify the populace of London. It is true that we are still

indulged with the Lord Mayor's Show on the 9th of November; but the Guy Fawkes of the 5th has become a miserable affair of dirty little boys, and not such a cavalcade as I have witnessed when "No Popery" was chalked on the walls. In 1850 there was a wondrous revival, but the ragged Guys, as sketched by Mr. Doyle in 1849, are dying out. The donkey drawing the effigy in the cart is the type of the anniversary. The Church has given up its celebration. Greenwich Fair too has died out—its bonnettings and its scratch-backs, its bullies and its pickpockets. The diversions that were once common to the snobs and the roughs are passing away. There was formerly a private solace in "A Cydere Cellare duryng a Comyck Songe," when, as Mr. Pips records, "the thing that did most take was to see and hear one Ross sing the song of Sam Hall the chimney-sweep, going to be hanged." It is satisfactory to feel that the manly diversions which Doyle has depicted with wonderful truth and spirit have not faded away—that the emulation at Lord's Cricket Ground and the Thames Regatta are still objects of general interest, and keep alive a hearty spirit of good-fellowship amongst all men. The skaters on the Serpentine, male and female, are there to be admired—the unhappy bunglers are there to be laughed at.

When Mr. Doyle enters the houses of the higher class and the upper-middle class, he is perhaps more humorous than in his public scenes. But how unchanged are our manners and customs, since he presented us with "An At Home—ye Polka." The only perceptible difference is that the flounce had not then given place to the crinoline. It has been said that if a deaf man, who could not hear a note of

the music, were to behold a dance, he would think the whole party were mad, but there is more general insanity in "Socyetye Enjoyinge itself at a Soyrée." Personally I ought to be grateful that I have passed the time of life when I am expected to be gratified by standing for an hour or two in a crowded and insufferably hot room or suite of rooms, only too happy to get away, if possible, to some obscure corner, to escape from the strangers who bore me. It was no satisfaction to me, any more than it was to Mr. Pips, to see nothing extraordinary in a Lord's drawing-room "beyond the multitude of company, and divers writers, painters, and other persons of note, elbowing their way through the press." "A Few Friendes to Tea and a Little Musycke" is more endurable. It is a solemn thing, indeed, to stand behind the stout lady at the piano and murmur our approbation, but our health is not imperilled in such an evening party. "The Wedding Breakfast" is not quite so safe, but is agreeable enough if we have not the misfortune to be the elderly friend who is to propose the health of the bride and bridegroom. The "best man," who toasts the bridesmaids and vows that such angels never before alighted on this mortal sphere, has a happier position.

In continuing to adopt "Punch" as an Index to the social and political life of the Victorian era, I must be satisfied to take a more rapid glance at the incidents and characters that follow those of the middle of the century. 1850 was, however, remarkable for the struggles to assert their principles of the three great theological powers that would dominate over England—Low Church, High Church, Popery. Four sketches exhibit "The Admirable Working of

Lord Ashley's Measure." An aged woman reads the label "Post Office closed until Monday," and exclaims "Oh! I wish I knew how my dear girl is." In a cottage where children are preparing to go to bed, the good man tells his wife that he must go over to the Red Lion "to hear what's a doing, for since these new-fangled post-office changes, I can't get my bit of a newspaper." The tradesman at church heeds not the service, for he wonders whether Walker's bill was paid yesterday. The swindler on the steam-boat rejoices that he has a clear day's start of the brutal police. Public opinion was too strong for Lord Ashley's Measure, and such will be the case with every attempt to make people religious by Act of Parliament. These are the Herculean labours of Puritanism. "A Page for the Puseyites" exhibits the invasion of household privacy for the conversion of the aged and the young, of which the father of the family had no apprehension in the time when the Church rarely troubled itself about domestic edification. The appointment of English bishops by the Pope lighted up the country with a flame not very easily extinguished. The sovereign pontiff is making "The daring Attempt to break into a Church with the thin End of the Wedge." Cardinal Wiseman stands by his side—the coming bishop of Westminster. The aggressive policy of Rome was legislated against by the English parliament in 1851. The versatile public first applauded Lord John Russell's indignation, but in a few months laughed heartily when Leech gave us "The boy who chalked up 'No Popery!'—and then ran away!!"

In 1851 Bloomerism comes into the houses and walks the streets of London. The Great Exhibition

possibly brought over "this American Custom." How charming are Leech's English-women, as they turn round to gaze at the absurd Epicene costume of these wonderful importations. How true are his dirty boys hooting and grinning. "The Settling Day of the Betting Office Frequenter" is more true than humorous—the terrible lies beneath the comic. The policeman seizes a wretched boy in bed—the sporting youth who is supposed to have borrowed his master's cash-box to pay his bets. In a few years the betting-offices were shut up, and the vagabonds who used to frequent them congregated at the corners of the streets and blocked up the pavement. To me they were an intolerable nuisance, as they gathered at the corner of Farringdon Street and prevented an easy approach to my place of business. But what a study of character they presented in their eagerness or their desperation—their bloated faces, their bloodshot eyes, their watch chains and breast pins, their seedy coats and dirty shirts.

In 1853 the French Emperor and Mr. Bull, two sage physicians, hold "A Consultation about the State of Turkey." The sick man is on his bed. Death, in Russian garb, hovers over him ready to clutch his prey. At the end of the year Lord Aberdeen is smoking the Pipe of Peace, sitting on a barrel of gunpowder. The war begins. The guards are preparing to sail for the Crimea. The old routine of military dress and military management is displayed in "A striking Effect of choking and overloading our Guards at a late Review." The wretched soldiers are prostrate on the ground, beneath the horrible infliction of their black chokers and the ponderous baggage on their shoulders. On the

assembling of parliament in 1855, the conduct of the war became the subject of animadversion in and out of the Houses. Palmerston, an active lad, is clearing the dirty door-step of the administration of its mess of "Blunders, Routine, Precedent, Delay and Twaddle." Russell, who has just resigned, looks on saying, "Ah! I lived there once, but I was obliged to leave—it was such a very irregular family." The cleaning of the door-step brought Palmerston into power. After the reverses and changes of a Session or two, Pam, in 1857, is "The Winner of the Great National Steeple Chase." The Indian Mutiny is better conducted than the Crimean War. Palmerston as Boots at the British Lion knocks at the bed-room door of Sir Colin Campbell, with "Here's your hot water, Sir," and Sir Colin answers, "All right, I have been ready a long time."

In 1858 the Orsini Plot, hatched in London, revived the old cry of Perfidious Albion. Leech has a sketch of the British conspirator in Paris—a smiling, contented, well-to-do Englishman, sauntering with his hands in his pockets, watched by a dozen policemen. The ridiculous threats of some military myrmidons of the French Emperor had a considerable effect in producing the Volunteer Riflemen. The young and handsome engaged one is told by his mistress, "It entirely depends upon your attention to drill whether I give you that lock of hair or not," and at Christmas the middle-aged John Bull of double-chin and rotund proportions "guards his Pudding with his Rifle." The old jealousies are set at rest by "The True Lovers' Knot"—the Treaty of Commerce of 1860. "The Gladstone Pill" of increased Income Tax has been presented to the ailing

John Bull; but he is out again in full vigour when Gladstone's Budget relieves him of many troublesome taxes, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer is "The Boy for our Money."

The more recent political sketches, bearing as they do upon events still in progress, scarcely come within the purpose of this desultory chapter. Many of the subjects have called forth more strikingly than ever the great artistic talent of John Tenniel—one who has dealt with the leading topics of his own time in the spirit of a great historical painter. Up to the day when the sudden death of John Leech eclipsed the gaiety of nations, we had the most delicious representations of our English manners from his prolific pencil. Whether he was in the hunting-field, or at a watering-place, or in the drawing-room, everything he touched was made characteristic and interesting. The domestic life that he presents is the comfortable English life, which appears so dull to foreigners, but which has its own inappreciable happiness. We still have "The rising Generation." The small boy says "Going to the Pantomime, Clara, this afternoon?" and Clara answers, "A—No—I'm at Home—and have a Kettledrum at three o'clock!" But the juvenile impertinence of the school-boy is now more commonly associated with the coquettish airs of the little girl. Out of that comes in most cases, we may hope, that blessed result which has been so quaintly but truly expressed by Julius Hare—"To brothers, sisters are antiseptics."

In looking through these remarkable illustrations of nearly a quarter of a century, I often pause to wonder at the unity of purpose which pervades the publication during any particular year, or short series

of years. Still more am I surprised when I have run over forty-seven volumes, and find in them something far beyond a collection of sketches by the cleverest artists of their day. And yet I ought not to be surprised; for my intimacy with some members of the companionship of "Punch," has often made me acquainted with a peculiarity of its organisation. It is no secret that this periodical, which might very soon have dwindled into a vehicle for random caricatures and miscellaneous jokes, has in a great degree preserved its vitality by the interchange of thought between artists and writers at weekly meetings. Let no one familiar with Boards or Committees imagine a group intent on business—a dozen serious personages, seated on either side of a long table with a green baize cover, each with a quire of paper and an inkstand before him. Not out of such an array does inspiration come. It comes out of the "neat repast"—not unaccompanied "with wine," as Milton desired; perhaps even with that weed which Milton did not disdain. I have heard one of the ablest of the successors of A'Becket, Jerrold, and Thackeray describe some of these mysteries in a Lecture at Bristol. From my pleasant intercourse with Shirley Brooks I can judge how suggestive may still be the talk of the "round table" when the Paladins of the Press prepare to do battle against folly or something worse. But no such association could have preserved them from the malice and grossness of common satirists, had not a presiding mind directed their career. It is the rare merit of Mark Lemon that no impurity ever sullied the work of which he is the Editor,—that under his guidance Wit has thought it no restraint "to dwell in decencies for ever."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE narrative of my publishing enterprises was, in Chapter VIII., brought up to 1855; with the exception of the two most important works of my later years, the "English Cyclopædia" and the "Popular History of England." In these undertakings I had a proprietary interest, although, as I stated in the Preface to the present book, "I had to become more a writer and an editor than a publisher." I have reserved a brief account of these works until I should arrive, in the natural sequence of these 'Passages,' at the periods of their completion. The eight years that were occupied by the superintendence of the Cyclopædia—during seven of which I was also occupied in writing the History—bring me to the termination of the Half Century of my Working Life.

One of the most interesting novels of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton is entitled "What will he do with it?" When, in 1848, after the completion of the "Penny Cyclopædia," I had parted with the stock and stereotype plates, the copyright remained in my hands. It had cost a large sum of money; of its literary value no one doubted; but its commercial value remained to be tested. "What will he do with it?" said the Trade. I turned it to account in an

abridgment entitled the "National Cyclopædia." In this the original work was melted down to one-fourth of its dimensions. It was a useful book, but it was far from satisfying the requirements of those who sought in a Cyclopædia to supply the place of a small library. From this "National Cyclopædia" of too scanty dimensions, I turned my attention towards producing one of larger proportions even than the original work. The "Imperial Cyclopædia," of which a Prospectus was largely circulated, was proposed to be divided into eight or ten great compartments, each of which was to be prefaced by a treatise by some eminent writer. It would have been a large undertaking, but I had assurances of support from persons of influence, encouraging enough, but not sufficiently numerous to lead me onward to a great risk. Some of the letters of these supporters are before me. One of them is so characteristic of a nobleman who had an hereditary love of science, and a natural devotion to literature, that I may be pardoned the egotism of its insertion. Lord Ellesmere writes to me on the 19th of June, 1850 :—"I shall direct my bookseller to furnish the volumes as they come out, as I look upon your professional labours as among the best exertions of the day for fighting the devil and all his works." Lord Ellesmere's cordial letter to me was his answer to my proposal to publish by subscription. This plan, by which authors and publishers took hostages against evil fortune, was in general use during the first half of the eighteenth century. Like most other human things it was subject to abuse; but it was founded upon a true estimate of the peculiar risks of publishing. It is manifest that, if a certain number of persons unite

in agreement to purchase a book which is about to be printed, the author may be at ease with regard to the issue of the enterprise; and the subscribers ought to receive what they want, at a lower cost than when risk enters into price. For more than half a century nearly all the great books were published by subscription; and the highest in literature felt no degradation in themselves canvassing with their subscription receipts. The plan which, upon the face of it, was a just one for all parties—a fair exchange between seller and buyer—came in process of time to be regarded with suspicion. The practice of soliciting subscriptions which, in Pope, and Steele, and Johnson, and fifty other eminent authors, was legitimate and honourable, was in the next century either treated with cold neglect, or regarded with the same suspicion as the devices of the begging-letter writer. I quickly found out my mistake, and united myself with a publishing house who had the means of largely circulating a serial work throughout the kingdom.

I have devoted two Chapters of my second volume to the history of the "Penny Cyclopædia." I have there described the labours of the various Contributors, and have recorded some characteristic traits of the eminent persons who were associated in this work. It was completed in 1844. In the nine years that elapsed between that period and the commencement of the "English Cyclopædia," knowledge of all kinds had been accumulating at a rate of marvellous rapidity. The geographical descriptions, for example, of the "Penny Cyclopædia," had stopped short of the wonderful development of the Australian colonies. The new Cyclopædia was arranged in four divisions,

Geography, Natural History, Biography, Arts and Sciences. The two first of these Divisions were proceeding at the same time, and were each completed in two years and a half. What a store of new materials had been gathering together, for the use of the Geographer and the Naturalist, that required to be set forth in the remodelled Cyclopædia! These two Divisions were succeeded by that of Biography. If no other additions had been required than the introduction of names of living persons, the new literary labour would have been of no small amount—sufficient indeed to form a separate book, not so large but essentially as complete as the 'Biographie des Contemporains.' This Biographical Division, in six volumes, was completed in 1858. The Division of Arts and Sciences included a great amount of miscellaneous subjects, not capable of being introduced into the more precise arrangement of the three previous departments. It was completed in eight volumes in 1861. In my Introduction to the eighth volume, I said—"it has been produced the last in the series, that nothing of new invention and discovery in Science—nothing of progressive improvement in the Arts—might be omitted."

In the conduct of this work I adopted two principles; first that not an article, not a page, not a line, should be reprinted without revision; secondly, that every new Contributor should be so reliable in his talents and his acquirements, that his articles might be safely adopted without undergoing that superintendence which the Useful Knowledge Society professed to undertake for the "Penny Cyclopædia," and which was often very judiciously exerted. Noticing the Contributors to the earlier work, when I

was writing these "Passages" in 1863, I was looking back twenty years. There was a sort of historical interest attached to many of these names, and I could speak of them unreservedly and without any invidious distinction. It is not so with the Contributors to a work which was only completed three years before the time when I am now writing. My own duties in the conduct of the work involved little more than a general superintendence. In the Preface to the Natural History Division I acknowledged my obligations to Dr. Edwin Lankester, who had brought the original articles into a more systematic shape; who had removed much that was obsolete; and who, having access to the opinions, and securing the assistance, of the best living authorities, had neglected no new materials that were at that time available. I had further, at the close of the work, to thank my fellow-labourers during many years—Mr. A. Ramsay and Mr. J. Thorne—for the active and intelligent share they had taken in its management, by which the regularity of publication, and the correctness of the text, had been mainly secured.

I might probably have been induced to say more of the plan and conduct of this book—which, without arrogance, I may call a great book,—had I not been able to refer for further details to one of the most learned and interesting articles that ever appeared in a critical work—"The History of Cyclopædias," in the "Quarterly Review" for April, 1863. Of the commendation of this writer I have just cause to be proud, for it is founded upon an acquaintance, little less than extraordinary, with the Cyclopædias of all countries and languages, of far-removed or of recent times. I am satisfied that he speaks from an honest

conviction alone, when he says—"the 'English Cyclopædia' is a work that as a whole has no superior and very few equals of its kind; that, taken by itself, supplies the place of a small library; and, used in a large library, is found to present many points of information that are sought in vain in any other cyclopædia in the English language." The "Quarterly Review" is chiefly addressed to those who have leisure and abundant means; but there is another class to whom the "English Cyclopædia" is strongly recommended as a book for those who labour with their hands, and have little time for systematic study. In the "Working Men's College Magazine" for November, 1861, there is an article signed V. Lushington, for which I have abstained from offering my thanks, for I feel that to express personal gratitude to a critic is to imply that other considerations than those of truth and justice may have suggested his praise. I cannot probably, however, better conclude my notice of a work which has brought me abundant honour, than by giving an eloquent passage from this notice. It will be seen that Mr. Lushington is not one of those who think it necessary to write down to the comprehension of working men:—

"Perhaps the first sensation of the reader on opening these massive volumes will be one of bewilderment, and unwillingness to traverse any such mountain of knowledge. But on better consideration he will feel two things; first, that kind of reverence which the spectacle of any great human labour cannot but call forth; and secondly, that this (or indeed any) Cyclopædia is a witness to the inexhaustible interest of reality and simple truth. He will see that it is in fact a record of a thousand thousand conquests over

thick night, won in many generations by far-reaching industry, and patient intelligence, in many cases even—say the discovery of America—by downright unmistakeable valour: and so gazing on these columns, there may come flashing through his mind something of the exultation with which a people greets a victorious army returning homeward. At least he cannot but observe how the age in which we live is assiduously minding and doing her business; everywhere, extending and consolidating positive knowledge; with honest sober eyes scrutinising the past of human history, studying the starry heavens, the solid earth, and all living things, tracking everywhere the dominion of stedfast laws, then recording what is found, for ourselves and for those who come after. A Cyclopædia witnesses that all these things are being done."

In 1854 I was instigated by an article in "The Times" seriously to contemplate the task of writing a general history of England. Lord John Russell had delivered an address at Bristol on the study of history, and the leading journal took up the subject of the noble speaker's complaint "that we have no other history of England than Hume's"—that "when a young man of eighteen asks for a history of England, there is no resource but to give him Hume." I had published "The Pictorial History of England" some years before—in many respects a valuable history, but one whose limits had gone far beyond what, as its projector, I had originally contemplated. I altogether rejected the idea of making an abridgment of that history. Many materials for a *History of the People* had been collected by me

without any immediate object of publication. The remarks of "The Times" led me to depart from my original design of writing a Domestic History of England apart from its Public History. Upon a more extended plan, I would endeavour to trace through our long continued annals the essential connection between our political history and our social. To accomplish this, I would not keep the People in the background, as in many histories, and I would call my work "The Popular History of England."

For more than a year I was gradually preparing for my task, and was ready to begin the printing at the end of 1855. It was to be published in monthly parts. My publishers desiring that the first part should contain an introduction, setting forth the objects of a new history of England, I was induced to explain my motives for undertaking it, with a sincerity which perhaps may be deemed imprudent. It may be as imprudent for the historian as for the statesman to make any general profession of principles at the onset of his career. The succession of events in either case might modify his past convictions. But I have no reason to depart in letter or spirit from what I wrote: "The People, if I understand the term rightly, means the Commons of these realms, and not any distinct class or section of the population. Ninety years ago, Goldsmith called the 'middle order of mankind' the 'People,' and those below them the 'Rabble.' We have outlived all this. A century of thought and action has widened and deepened the foundations of the State. This People, then, want to find, in the history of their country, something more than a series of annals, either of policy or war. In connection with a faithful

narrative of public affairs, they want to learn their own history—how they have grown out of slavery, out of feudal wrong, out of regal despotism,—into constitutional liberty, and the position of the greatest estate of the realm."

In the summer of 1858 I had completed four volumes of my history, reaching the period of the Revolution of 1688. In the postscript to the fourth volume I endeavoured to illustrate the principle, so well defined by my friend Mr. Samuel Lucas in a Lecture on Social Progress, that the history of every nation "has been in the main sequential"—that each of its phases has been "the consequence of some prior phase, and the natural prelude of that which succeeded it." I pointed out that the early history of the Anglican Church was to be traced in all the subsequent elements of our ecclesiastical condition; that upon the Roman and Saxon civilization were founded many of the principles of government which still preserved their vitality; that the Norman despotism was absorbed by the Anglo-Saxon freedom; and that the recognition of the equal rights of all men before the Law was the only mode by which feudality could maintain itself. "From the deposition of Richard the Second to the abdication of James the Second, every act of national resistance was accomplished by the union of classes, and was founded upon some principle of legal right for which there was legal precedent. Out of the traditional and almost instinctive assertion of the popular privileges, have come new developments of particular reforms, each adapted to its own age, but all springing out of that historical experience which we recognise as Constitutional."

In November, 1862, I completed the book upon which I had been employed unremittingly for a seventh part of my working life. I then stated in a postscript that, with the exception of three chapters on the Fine Arts, "The Popular History" had been wholly written by myself. Being the production of one mind, I trusted that the due proportions of the narrative, from the first chapter to the last, had been maintained. I again set forth the principles which had enabled me to carry it through with a consistent purpose. "Feeling my responsibilities to be increased by the fact that my duty was to impart knowledge and not to battle for opinions, my desire has been to cherish that love of liberty which is best founded upon a sufficient acquaintance with its gradual development and final establishment amongst us; to look with a tolerant judgment even upon those who have sought to govern securely by governing absolutely; to trace with calmness the efforts of those who have imperilled our national independence by foreign assault or domestic treason, but never to forget that a just love of country is consistent with historical truth; to carry forward, as far as within the power of one who has watched joyfully and hopefully the great changes of a generation, that spirit of improvement, which has been more extensively and permanently called forth in the times of which this concluding volume treats than in the whole previous period from the Revolution of 1688."

This exposition of the views with which I commenced and concluded "The Popular History" may appear to be set forth with undue formality. I think my reasons for so doing will be attributed to something better than the egotism of authorship. If the

course of my narrative through four thousand pages had been inconsistent with these declarations—if it had been conducted in a spirit opposed to the best authorities on our constitutional history—I should have deserved to be judged out of my own mouth. In a review of a reviewer who appears to consider my history as the embodiment of all the dangerous principles of democracy, I find this passage in "The Times" of November 1, 1864:—"Mr. Kebbel does really allege with much justice that the fundamental error of Mr. Knight's history, is the theory according to which the people of this country are represented as having been from the beginning divided into two hostile armies, the one seeking to defend or to augment, the other to diminish or destroy, a mass of oppressive and tyrannous privileges and customs. The proofs that Mr. Knight maintains this heresy, and that it is a heresy, we do not enter into." That I have not maintained this heresy without very important modifications, I fearlessly assert. That I have been one of those who have told the people "of the grandeur of resistance," without telling them "something of the grandeur of obedience," I utterly deny. But I cannot admit that it is a "fundamental error" to represent the people as long divided into the maintainers and the opposers of "oppressive and tyrannous privileges and customs." If in this particular I am a heretic, let me, in some measure, defend myself by the example of other heretics.

The early years of the Conquest provide ample evidence of Norman oppression and Saxon resistance. Whether the oppressions were those of the king or of his military chieftains, their consequence was insurrection. William went on from mildness to

ferocity, from a show of justice to the most lawless exercise of power. "It is a fearful and disgusting history. It would be humiliating to feel that the people from whom we are sprung did not turn and rend 'this very stark man and very savage'—this man 'stark beyond all bounds to those who withsaid his will,'—did we not know that no oppression could ultimately subdue this long-suffering race, and that the instruments of their partial subjection were, in little more than a century, united with them in building up a system of government which should, at every new storm of tyranny, become stronger and more defiant."* One of the greatest of English orators has described the barons of the reign of John. Lord Chatham, in his speech of 1770, in the case of John Wilkes, said:—"It is to your ancestors, my Lords, it is to the English Barons that we are indebted for the Laws and Constitution we possess. Their virtues were rude and uncultivated, but they were great and sincere. Their understandings were as little polished as their manners, but they had hearts to distinguish right from wrong; they had heads to distinguish truth from falsehood; they understood the rights of humanity, and they had spirit to maintain them." The historian of our Constitutional history says:—"From this era a new soul was infused into the people of England." During the six hundred and fifty years which have elapsed since the day of Runnemede, they have carried on the battle for liberty in the same practical and temperate spirit which animated the mailed knights who won the Great Charter. In "the grandeur

* "Popular History of England," Vol. I. p. 191.

of resistance" they have not lost sight of "the grandeur of obedience." Over and over again they have been "divided into two hostile armies." But reconcilement has gradually come out of disunion; and for why? Resistance has almost invariably proceeded from the necessity of the case. There may be essential differences of opinion as to the force of that necessity, whether the two leading examples of resistance—the Great Rebellion and the Revolution—be considered. But I apprehend—now that the doctrine of passive obedience has ceased to be advocated, even by those who consider a Popular History dangerous—that it will be generally acknowledged that "the peculiarity of the British Constitution is this—that its only professed object is the general good, and its only foundation the general will. Hence the people have a right, acknowledged from time immemorial, fortified by a pile of statutes, and authenticated by a revolution that speaks louder than them all, to see whether abuses have been committed, and whether their properties and their liberties have been attended to as they ought to be."* This is the resistance of modern times. Of the elder spirit Burke says:—"It has a pedigree and illustrating ancestors. It has its bearings and its ensigns armorial. It has its gallery of portraits, its monumental inscriptions, its records, evidences, and titles." When we enter upon the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the pedigree may be somewhat blurred and mildewed; the ancestors may look as impossible to be imitated in their actions as in their costumes; the gallery of portraits may be little

* Curran's Speech in behalf of Rowan.

better than imaginary. Their successors come nearer to our common life. The hostile armies are differently constituted. The serf no longer exists; the burgher fights by the side of the noble; the artisan is coming forward to assert his equal rights before the Law. The battle against oppression is no longer to be fought in tented fields. It is the battle of public opinion, which, in the cause of justice and right, will ever be victorious. I should become tedious if I were to linger over the earlier times when Public Opinion was, as yet, the Hercules in the cradle. If I have committed a "fundamental error" in my alleged representations of society as divided into two hostile armies, I have at least endeavoured in treating of the past, to keep steadily in view its certain influence upon the future. "I have tried to evolve the conviction that through many long and painful struggles, we have been constantly tending towards a complete union of monarchical institutions with the largest amount of freedom, whether of associated action, of public discussion, or of private conduct. In describing the religious contests of four centuries, I have striven to show how, amidst all their evils, the spirit of Protestantism has been invariably allied with the progress of liberal institutions and national independence; but, at the same time, I have not forgotten that the principle of toleration is the one great good that has been slowly working its way, as the passions and prejudices of Churches and sects have yielded to the universal right of liberty of conscience."* The steady influence of that Public Opinion, which has prevented resistance becoming anarchy, and obedience conducting to slavery, has

* "Popular History," Vol. IV. Postscript, p. 455.

grown from age to age with the material as well as the moral development of our country. In forming the plan of my history, I set out upon the principle that there was an inseparable connection between our political and our social history. "When there is prosperous industry and fireside comfort, then, it may be assumed, there is good government. When labour is oppressed and homes are wretched, then, however powerful may be authority, and arms however triumphant, there is 'something rotten in the State.'" *

In passing onward to the second great division of our country's history, I thus concluded the first half of my narrative. "In 1689, the Constitution was established through the principle of Resistance, not upon any new theories, but upon fundamental laws, many of which were of an older date than that of the oldest oak which stood upon English ground. For this reason, it has never again been necessary to call in the principle of Resistance. A time would come, when the government of England, being so essentially a Parliamentary government, the struggles of Parties would have more regard to the possession of power than to the interests of the nation. But it was the essential consequence of these very strifes of Party, that, whatever the influence of oligarchs or demagogues, a controlling public opinion was constantly growing and strengthening."†

"The Popular History of England" to the period of the Revolution embraced a class of subjects that was once considered extraneous to history—the progress of manufactures and commerce—the developments of literature and the arts—the aspects of

* "Popular History," Vol. I. Introduction.
† *Ibid.*, Vol. IV. p. 449.

manners and of common life. The same principle was constantly kept in view in the succeeding four volumes, which brought up the history to 1849—an epoch marked by the final extinction of the Corn Laws. This large class of subjects, so essentially connected with our civil, military, and religious annals, was treated by me, "not in set dissertations under distinct heads, separated from the course of events by long intervals, but in frequent notices, either in special chapters at periods marked by characteristics of progress, or occurring as incidental illustrations of the political narrative." The experience of the present generation may be sufficient to trace the connection between the progress of good government, following the gradual discomfiture of corrupt or ignorant government, and the progress of industry, art, and letters, maintaining and carrying forward the power and influence of political improvement.

The proportions of those chapters of my Popular History of England which have reference to the national Industry and the progress of the Arts, as compared with the chapters on our Civil, Military, and Religious History, scarcely warrant me in accepting the title which has been conferred upon me,—that of "The Boswell of Birmingham." It is a very pretty piece of alliteration, and has the true ring of that small wit which goes a good way towards the making of a periodical critic of the insolent order. In the four first volumes, which bring the history down to the Revolution, one-tenth only of the whole matter is occupied with the subjects of Commerce and Manufactures, of Science and Art, of Literature, of the Condition of the People. In the second half of the work about one-fifth of the whole text is

devoted to these subjects. Of the eight volumes, comprising four thousand pages, an amount equal to one volume is devoted to these various manifestations of the progress of a people. Such details were once considered extraneous to history proper; and even now, some who think, or affect to think, that history should confine itself to the concerns of Courts and Cabinets, regard them as vulgar. Such, especially, is their opinion about Commerce and Manufactures. Modern statesmanship has a different creed. It has been compelled to guide its course of political action by a broad view of the social condition of the entire population, rather than by the interests or prejudices of a party or a class. Never in our own country, and to a certain extent in other countries, had the claims of industry—not upon patronage, not upon protection, not upon bounties, but simply to be left free to work out its own good—been more regarded in the highest places, as the one great foundation of national prosperity. The slightest glance at the early history of England will show that with the prosperity of industry, and that security of property, which was necessary for its more general distribution, gradually came internal tranquillity, in spite of disputed successions and constant attempts to put the neck of one class under the heel of another. The "hostile armies" were, in every succeeding generation, becoming reduced in numbers, and more and more open to the reconciliation of their conflicting pretensions. As the mediæval castles gradually became mansions; as the privileges of a caste were put away, like "unscoured armour hung by the wall;" as there grew, out of feudal exclusiveness, an aristocracy not alien to the commonalty; the yeoman, the merchant,

the artisan, and last of all the peasant, came to be regarded as integral portions of the state. Then, and not till then, was society secure in the established reign of law and order. Then, and not till then, could those who did not labour with their hands sit secure in their homes, even should an occasional demagogue attempt to re-kindle the lights and fires of the fourteenth century to the tune of—

> "When Adam delved and Eve span,
> Who was then the gentleman?"

I might run over every era of our modern history to show how, with the development of Industry and the accumulation of Wealth, those who have been seeking "to diminish or destroy oppressive and tyrannous privileges and customs" have been constrained to employ other weapons than physical force. There was a time when "resistance was an ordinary remedy for political distempers—a remedy which was always at hand, and which, though doubtless sharp at the moment, produced no deep or lasting ill effects." The historian marks the difference of our own times; when "resistance must be regarded as a cure more desperate than almost any malady that can afflict the state." But there is something better than the sword, if occasion should arise for uttering again the ancient demand for "redress of grievances;" and Macaulay shows us the alternative: "As we cannot, without the risk of evils from which the imagination recoils, employ physical force as a check on misgovernment, it is evidently our wisdom to keep all the constitutional checks on misgovernment in the highest state of efficiency; to watch

with jealousy the first beginnings of
and never to suffer irregularities, even when
in themselves, to pass unchallenged."* The old
of resistance has become a Constabulary
equipped only with the staff that is the sym
Law and Order.

Here, strictly speaking, terminates the narr
my labour and my observation during half a ce
This Chapter records the principal employme
my time, to the end of 1862. I regard the chie
of that occupation, during seven years, as h
been to me a source of happiness. Removed,
great degree, from commercial labours and a
that continuous direction of my mind to a subj
interesting and engrossing as a General Histo
England, had a tranquillizing influence; and
pared me to look back upon my past career with
thing like a philosophical estimate of its good
evil fortune.

Until the Septuagenarian shall hear "
Nature's signal to retreat," Rest and Re
properly succeed the excitements of "a Wo
Life." The task of writing these "Passages"
been at once Rest and Retrospection. It
volved no laborious research; it has compelle
violent suppression of natural egotism to fo
speaking of personal matters that could hav
interest for others; it has demanded little more
an accurate memory of former events, and a
and charitable estimate of my contemporaries. T
altogether, this also has been a pleasurable

* Macaulay, "History of England," 1st. ed., Vol. I., p.

nd, to compare small things with great, the "sc
nelancholy" which Gibbon felt when he wrote "
ast lines of the last page" of his immortal Hist-
comes over me, as I contemplate taking a final le
' of an old and agreeable companion." Let me p

NOTE TO CHAPTER XIII.

In the "Edinburgh Review" of September, 1828, was an elaborate article on "Hallam's Constitu History," which, in 1846, was reprinted by Mr. Maca his "Essays." It is a connected view of the great of eight centuries for civil and religious liberty, and was still dividing the country into "two hostile armi the time when this able paper was originally published. readers will not, I think, be displeased at finding extract from this article, which presents a lucid facts upon which I have touched in the present chapter.

"In the reign of Henry the Seventh, all the poli ferences which had agitated England since the No Conquest seemed to be set at rest. The long and struggle between the Crown and the Barons had te The grievances which had produced the rebellions of and Cade had disappeared. Villanage was scarcely kn The two royal houses, whose conflicting claims had convulsed the kingdom, were at length united. The whose pretensions, just or unjust, had disturbed the settlement, were overthrown. In religion there was no dissent, and probably very little secret heresy. The old jects of contention, in short, had vanished; those were to succeed had not yet appeared.

"Soon, however, new principles were announced; prin which were destined to keep England during two cen and a half in a state of commotion. The Ref divided the people into two great parties. The Pro were victorious. They again subdivided themselves. Po factions were engrafted on theological sects. The m animosities of the two parties gradually emerged in light of public life. First came conflicts in Par then civil war; then revolutions upon revolutions, e

tended by its appurtenance of proscriptions, and persecutions, and tests; each followed by severe measures on the part of the conquerors; each exciting a deadly and fostering hatred in the conquered. During the reign of George the Second, things were evidently tending to repose. At the close of that reign, the nation had completed the great revolution which commenced in the early part of the sixteenth century, and was again at rest. The fury of sects had died away. The Catholics themselves practically enjoyed toleration, and more than toleration they did not yet venture even to desire. Jacobitism was a mere name. Nobody was left to fight for that wretched cause, and very few to drink for it. The Constitution, purchased so dearly, was on every side extolled and worshipped.

* * * * *

"How soon faction again began to ferment is well known. In the 'Letters of Junius,' in Burke's 'Thoughts on the Cause of the Discontents,' and in many other writings of less merit, the violent dissensions which speedily convulsed the country are imputed to the system of favouritism which George the Third introduced, to the influence of Bute, or to the profligacy of those who called themselves the King's friends. With all deference to the eminent writers to whom we have referred, we may venture to say that they lived too near the events of which they treated, to judge correctly. The schism which was then appearing in the nation, and which has been from that time almost constantly widening, had little in common with those schisms which had divided it during the reigns of the Tudors and the Stuarts. The symptoms of popular feeling, indeed, will always be in a great measure the same; but the principle which excited that feeling was here new. The support which was given to Wilkes, the clamour for reform during the American war, the disaffected conduct of large classes of people at the time of the French Revolution, no more resembled the opposition which had been offered to the Government of Charles the Second, than that opposition resembled the contest between the Roses. . . . . . . The conflict of the seventeenth century was maintained by the Parliament against the Crown. The conflict

which still remains undecided, and in which our children and grandchildren will probably be called to act or to suffer, is between a large portion of the people on the one side, and the Crown and the Parliament united on the other."

It would be premature to assert that the conflict thus described was put an end to by the vast changes that were scarcely imagined possible in 1828. But "the hostile armies," as I have endeavoured to show, have been disbanded. To trace the course of long and fierce struggles between the Crown and the Barons; of grievances producing rebellion; of conflicting claims of royal houses; of political factions engrafted on theological sects; and of factions again fermenting—this is not necessarily to minister to a democratic spirit, as those would infer who choose to mistake the true intent and meaning of the word "Popular" as applied to a "History of England."

L'Envoy.

"Why, then, a final note prolong
Or lengthen out a closing song,
Unless to bid the gentles speed,
Who long have listed to my rede?"

SCOTT—*L'envoy to Marmion.*

"*Moth.* Is not *L'envoy* a *Salve?*
Armado. No, Page. It is an epilogue, or discourse to make plain
Some obscure precedence that hath tofore been sain"

SHAKSPERE—*Love's Labour's Lost,* iii. 1

CHAPTER XIV.

L'Envoy.

AFTER an absence of nearly thirty years, I have come again to dwell at Hampstead. There are here, as everywhere else in the suburbs of London, houses innumerable, where there were once green pastures. But the old village, and the old heath, are little changed, since Henry Brooke made them the scene of his "Fool of Quality;" since Fanny Burney took Evelina to the Assembly at "The Long Room;" and since George Steevens, the mischievous "Puck" of black letter, had the happiness to live here in his bachelor-quiet, unvexed by legions of donkey-drivers. During my residence at Hampstead from 1830 to 1835, I was a hard-worker; but I was not so indefatigable a corrector of proofs as Steevens,

> "Whom late, from Hampstead journeying to his book,
> Aurora oft for Cephalus mistook,
> What time he brush'd her dews with hasty pace,
> To meet the printer's dev'let face to face."*

Those five years of my residence here were the great turning-point of our modern history. Hampstead is not greatly changed; but what a change has come over England since the days of George the Fourth!

* "Pursuits of Literature."

Let me endeavour to take a *coup d'œil* of *moral* causes which have created an era so essen different from its predecessor.

In 1783, Charles Fox propounded in Parliam doctrine which could then scarcely be called pr "What is the end of all government? Ce the happiness of the governed." He added—"O may hold different opinions; but this is mine, proclaim it."* In the early part of the next century, Bentham's axiom, that "the greatest ha ness for the greatest number" is the true obj all legislation, was a text for speakers and w who were a little before their age. This was *an* —as certain to influence the future of society as idea of liberty or the idea of equality. But English, it is said, are slow to adopt ideas. Step step the principle of the happiness of the gove made a slow and timid advance. It is faintly traced in the slight mitigations of the sangui criminal code by Romilly, and the insertion of wedge into the old barrier of Protection by Huski But the idea never got completely hold of the tional mind, as the rule of public and private cond towards "the greatest number," till the times wh followed the bloodless revolution of 1832. I attempt, in this retrospective chapter, to consi the various modes in which the idea has worked, changing many of the former relations of our s life. Such changes in the condition of the peo essentially belong to the science of politics. with politics, in the ordinary sense of the have no intention of meddling.

* Speech on the East India Bill.

It is scarcely forty years since that, in my rambles around Windsor, I was often deterred from striking into a by-path by the announcement—"Steel-traps and spring-guns are set in these preserves." I had no desire to trespass on the sacred places in which the hare and the pheasant were enshrined. I sometimes thought of Quentin Durward and of the thickets of Plessis-les-Tours "surrounded with every species of hidden pitfall, snare, and gin to entrap the wretch who should venture thither without a guide." The spirit of the fifteenth century seemed, in this one characteristic, to have survived in the nineteenth—the spirit of small respect for human life. It may in the present day be scarcely deemed credible, that in 1820, the Chief-Justice of the King's Bench to a certain extent justified the practice of setting spring-guns, by using the following words: "I cannot say that repeated and increasing acts of aggression may not reasonably call for increased means of defence and protection." He thought that no person, having notice given him, would be weak and foolish enough to expose himself to the perilous consequences of his trespass. Lord Suffield, who was mainly instrumental in procuring, in 1827, the abolition of this barbarous remnant of the feudal unconcern for the safety of life and limb, told a story in Parliament, which probably had as much effect in procuring this result, as if he had circumstantially related the injuries inflicted by these engines upon a dozen peasants or yeomen. "I have heard," he said, "of a judge on the circuit, who not very long ago wishing to take air and exercise before the business in court commenced, or after it had concluded, was on the point of entering a wood where he would almost inevitably

have been shot, had he not received accidental intimation that spring-guns were set there."

I have selected this instance of the extravagant notions which once prevailed as to the rights of property, to point to one of the main causes of the alienation of classes, which, more than any other cause, prevented the general reception of the idea, that to promote the happiness of the greatest number was the duty of all, and especially of the rich and powerful. The true rights of property have not been weakened because public opinion utters the most decisive "No" when a great man asks "May I not do what I like with my own?"

That interpretation of the rights of property, which admits the majority into a moral partnership with the minority, was the foundation of all the first great political changes that have given a new character to the present age. This interpretation gave us the Reform Bill, which swept away the vested interests in Nomination Boroughs. Corporation Reform took away the administration of large funds from self-elected and irresponsible bodies, to place them in the hands of those who would account to their fellow-citizens for their righteous employment for the public good. The abolition of the Corn Laws destroyed the tenacious hold of the landed interest upon their prescriptive claim to tax the food of the community, in the mistaken belief that dear corn and good rents were necessarily associated, and that the power of the rich to expend largely was the main support of the industrious, and the essential condition of the welfare of the poor. The overthrow of Negro Slavery in our West India Colonies recognized the principle that no rights of property could be main-

tained which were based upon injustice as between man and man. These changes were essentially revolutionary, but different from all other revolutions in bringing with them no civil war; no damage to the throne and the altar; no subversion of an ancient aristocracy; no abatement of the proper influence of the modern capitalist. I pass them by, to proceed to those social improvements which have grown out of them, evidencing the altered spirit in which we have come to regard "the greatest number."

And first let me glance at those Fiscal changes which, one after another, have lightened the pressure of indirect taxation upon articles of necessity, and have thus not only lessened the cost of food, of clothing, of dwellings, of furniture, by the entire abolition or reduction of Customs and Excise duties, but have left industry free to do its proper work without supervision and restriction. In my "Companion to the Almanac" I shall find the necessary data for tracing the course of administrative and financial improvements, and all the other results of a principle of legislation which alone can maintain the harmony of a State:—

> "For Government, *through high, and low, and lower,*
> Put into parts, doth keep in one concent;
> Congreeing in a full and natural close,
> Like music."

This is "the harmonic power of political justice," which Shakspere, by some means, derived from Plato.*

In 1820, the "Edinburgh Review," in an elaborate

* See "Knight's Pictorial Shakspere." Illustrations to Henry V., Act 1

article on "Taxation and the Corn Laws," used these emphatic words: "It is no exaggeration to affirm, that, with the solitary exception of water, there is not a single necessary consumed in the empire which is not, directly or indirectly, loaded with a most oppressive impost." There was one impost upon an article of prime necessity which first called upon the Legislature to listen to the general expressed public opinion. The *Salt* Duty was fifteen shillings a bushel—a tax equal to thirty times the cost of the salt. The revenue produced by this impost amounted to a million and a half; in spite of an immense amount of evasion and smuggling, which no penalties of fine or imprisonment could put down. In 1825 the tax was wholly repealed, having been previously reduced. There were at that time many political optimists who would exclaim—How is the repeal of this tax to improve the condition of the labouring classes? In the labourer's household there is not a bushel of salt consumed in a whole year! There was amongst such reasoners a belief in a charming paradox—that government was a beneficent power, which followed the analogy of nature. As the evaporation of the earth's surface was returned to it in refreshing showers and fertilizing dews, so the produce of taxes was always beneficially expended by the State for the universal good. History was rather against the theory, as applicable to the Salt Tax; for it told that the Gabelle—the salt code of France—had something to do in bringing about the Revolution.

It was several years before the British Parliament began again to bestir itself, in the repeal or mitigation of the multifarious taxes on necessaries which

few could affirm did not interfere with the happiness of the greatest number. Let me attempt a slight sketch of the position of an artisan and his family, from 1830 to 1864.

Thomas Cleave is the jobbing carpenter and builder of a small village—such a neglected and impoverished place as I have described as Combe in this volume (chap. iv., p. 70). He has succeeded to the cottage, the workshop, and the tools of his father. He marries a careful and industrious young woman; and he thrives in his humble way. By uniting the wages of his own labour, and the profits of his small stock, he contrives to live without any severe privations. There is very little new building going forward in Combe; for all building materials are extremely dear, through the operation of enormous duties upon timber, upon bricks, upon glass. His own cottage, though once tolerably comfortable, has been rendered dark and dismal by the heavy window tax; for half of the old casements which, before the war, permitted his parents to enjoy the fresh air and the bright sunshine, have been displaced by solid brickwork. His engagements sometimes compel him to work at night; but he always lights an extra candle grudgingly. His wife mends her children's stockings by the thinnest bit of tallow in the chandler's shop; and she is not particularly anxious that they should have clean linen, or even clean faces, for soap is extravagantly dear. The soap and the candle are held by the exciseman as two of the supporters of his administrative function; for he is always sealing-up and unsealing, locking-up and unlocking, the cauldrons and the utensils which the soap-boiler and the candle-maker require. In that household there must

be not only rigid economy, but a great deal of pinching self-denial. I have adverted to the narrative of Christopher Thomson, who left off sugar in his tea that he might buy the "Penny Magazine" (vol. ii., p. 183). In 1829, Mr. Huskisson, in the House of Commons, expressed his belief that, in consequence of the enormous duty, the poor working man with a large family was denied the use of sugar; and that two-thirds of the poorer consumers of coffee drank that beverage without sugar. The duty upon foreign sugar then amounted to a prohibition; the duty upon sugar from our colonies was about 3*d.* per lb. The tax upon tea was an ad-valorem duty amounting to 200 per cent. In 1834 it was reduced to fixed duties averaging about 2*s.* 6*d.* the lb. Tea and sugar were thus only unusual luxuries for a poor family thirty years ago. Beer was the Englishman's favourite beverage—the national drink, as he believed, which gave him strength and health. There was some reason in the belief; but when beer was about double its present price, the workman was compelled to moderation, if he did his duty to his family. Spirits and tobacco I pass by. They are not necessaries of life.

"By taxes innumerable, imposed immediately and through every medium by which man is assailable, an universal poverty is created in the midst of affluence." It is curious that this lament should occur in an article on "The Drama." The argument of the Reviewer is—that the heavy taxation of that time "deprived the people of the enjoyment of the theatre." To those who upon principle opposed all popular amusements, especially theatrical, this instance of the effects of taxation would go for nothing.

They would rejoice in this, as they would regret that another manifestation of the benefits of taxation had fallen into disuse. A few years only had elapsed since the Barons of the Exchequer had solemnly decided that the scenes of the theatre, being painted canvas, were precisely the same as floor-cloth, and were liable to the same heavy duty. The exciseman measuring and calculating must have been a singular intruder at a rehearsal. This is one instance, amongst many, of the extreme sharpness with which the revenue laws were pressed into interpretations which had slight regard to their original intent and meaning. This official vigilance, which involved a good deal of oppression, gradually became relaxed as new ideas upon the subject of taxation were entertained in high places. It was at length discovered that the productiveness of a tax is not in proportion to a *maximum* rate. Then came, with the knowledge of this truth, the conviction that every tax which put the necessaries and comforts of life beyond the reach of the bulk of the people, had a tendency to degrade them in their habits and make them disloyal in their opinions. The security of the government was a necessary corollary of the happiness of the governed.

My imaginary Thomas Cleave has struggled on through thirty or forty years to maintain a decent position. He has educated his children, and has put them in a way to earn their own living. His condition during the last twenty years has been steadily improving. The great article of household consumption, bread, is about half the price it was before the repeal of the laws on the importation of corn. He has two stalwart sons working with him, at an increasing

business. There are the homesteads of the farmers to alter and improve. The land proprietors are building snug cottages in the place of the old hovels. He can do the work cheaply, and more as a skilled workman at a better profit, now the excessive taxes on building materials are taken away. He has opened the blocked-up windows of his old home, for there is no longer a window tax. His good dame does not think it necessary now to practise any severe stint in soap or candles. She can, though not very often, treat herself with a neat new gown, for printed cottons are no longer taxed. The afternoon *tea* is stronger than of old, and there is no lack of sugar for those who desire it. The good man has bought some useful and amusing books, and he does not begrudge himself a weekly newspaper. There was a time when he could not afford to receive letters from relations at a distance, or to write letters. Once or twice a year he took a long walk to the mansion of the county member, to see if the butler could obtain for him a frank, to send to his brother in Yorkshire. Penny Postage has settled that difficulty.

In the midst of the Reform agitation of 1831, Cholera Morbus first made its appearance in England. I have described some of the aspects of that time, in which the most equal minds could scarcely control their fears in presence of a strange visitation. The panic of some, however, led them to adopt the belief that their safety would depend upon their entire isolation from the rest of the community. In some households, a terror had been incited by the apprehension that domestics should be forbidden "to communicate with any one out-of-doors," and that "all supplies of food must be received from the police

purveyors."* Elaborate calculations were accordingly made for victualling the mansion or the villa during quarantine, with such a supply of bacon or flour as would dispense with the butcher and the baker. These extravagant fears and precautions would have been simply ludicrous, if the temporary preponderance of the feeling of indifference, or something worse, through which the Levite "passed by on the other side," had not inspired grave apprehensions of the tendencies of increasing national wealth to make the prosperous selfish. But out of this calamity of the Cholera arose a new object of Legislation, the care of the Public Health; and with sanitary laws came the conviction that Legislation would be inefficient without private exertions of incessant vigilance, and incomplete without that personal sympathy with the needy, and that compassion for the ignorant, which are worth more than any amount of money-giving.

The middle-class inhabitants of English towns, under their old municipal and other local institutions, were careful to preserve some outward manifestations of a regard for cleanliness, and a consequent solicitude for the public health. I take Stratford-upon-Avon as an example—a town subject to frequent visitations of the plague. In 1552, John Shakspere, the father of the poet, and other inhabitants of Henley Street, were fined for making a dung-heap in the road. In 1558, several of the same persons were amerced for not keeping their gutters clean. The Court Rolls exhibit a similar regard for the public health in other instances. The butchers are to carry

* See "Quarterly Review," vol. xlvi. p. 274.

forth their garbage after the hour of nine in the afternoon, and no householder is to receive a stranger to lodge for a night, without a special licence from the bailiff. Here then, three centuries ago, we find an anticipation of the Nuisances Removal Act of 1845, and the Common Lodging House Act of 1851. But during the long interval, the powers of Courts-Leet and of Bailiffs had fallen into disuse. In 1849, when a Report upon the sanitary condition of this town was published, it was alleged that the rate of mortality was unusually high, and was distinctly traceable to want of drainage, imperfect water supply, roads ill-paved or unpaved, foul open cesspools, and other abominations—all showing how little civilisation had advanced since the time when John Shakspere was fined for making a dung-heap before his door. But Stratford-upon-Avon was not a solitary case of neglect. Nearly all the country towns of England were as full of nuisances as I remember my native town of Windsor. The only indication of the presence of some authority, capable of preventing any encroachment upon public decency and comfort, was to be seen on an old painted board in the market-place, announcing that whoever laid any "dirt, filth, or rubbish" in the streets, would be proceeded against according to law. What the law was, few could tell, and none cared to know. At any rate, the law did not authorise any inspection of nuisances within the dwellings where the poor congregated, with pestiferous ditches all around them; nor was any care taken for a domestic provision of water by equable rating. There was a public pump or two, and there was the Thames. Water was an expensive luxury, even in the better houses. The old

water-mill below Windsor Bridge was the private property of an honest but eccentric plumber, who sometimes neglected to call for his charge during several years, and then, if there was any demur to paying the formidable arrear, would have no hesitation in threatening to cut off the supply. When I look at the altered state of things at the period at which I am writing, I could almost doubt the evidence, presented by the dates of ten or more Acts of Parliament, that the sanitary legislation which has called into action the useful labours of more than four hundred Boards of Health, and of the same number of Burial Boards, has not the recommendation of a higher antiquity than that of half a generation. We owe this legislation principally to two men, who will perhaps receive more ungrudging honour in another age than has been bestowed upon them in their own. The one is Dr. Southwood Smith, who has been called "the father of sanitary reform;" for to him we are indebted for the discovery of a truth which has come upon us like a new light. It was formerly held that poverty and disease are inseparable. Dr. Southwood Smith proved, some six-and-thirty years ago, that the high rate of mortality observed to prevail amongst the poorer population, did not necessarily attach to poverty itself, but was to be traced to the circumstances by which the poor are ordinarily surrounded in their dwellings. His worthy fellow-labourer was Edwin Chadwick. Ten years ago, the Earl of Carlisle, in speaking of Mr. Chadwick's labours in connection with the Poor Law and Sanitary Reform, alluded to a circumstance which had diminished the temporary popularity of many enthusiastic men—"a certain portion of posi-

tiveness and precipitation." Two years afterwards, I expressed my opinion upon this implied objection to Mr. Chadwick's administrative zeal. I repeat it now, for a friendship of thirty years ought not to interfere with the declaration of an honest conviction. "The 'positiveness and precipitation' which are thus conceded to a passing clamour, as a set-off against contemporary gratitude, have belonged, more or less, to every man whose earnestness has had to struggle with official indifference and procrastination. Mr. Chadwick came from the people. He was not, as Burke said of himself, 'swaddled, and nursed, and dandled into a legislator;' and he had to encounter the bitterest hatred of men whose principle was to do nothing till they were forced, and then to do as little as possible. Many of the sanitary measures also with which Mr. Chadwick was connected disturbed various large interests; and he had thus the common fate of all social reformers who are more anxious to enunciate unwelcome truths than careful to conciliate the supporters of profitable errors."

There is probably no such striking example of the rapidity with which an entirely new code of laws has been received into the public mind, and successfully established in defiance of local and personal interests, as that exhibited by the Sanitary Legislation of the last twenty years. Statutes, however, would have been passed in vain, had not the facts and principles, upon which they were based, been driven into the popular understanding by men such as those I have mentioned, who, despite of vested interests and deep-rooted prejudices, were bent upon advancing the welfare of the greatest number, by attacking some of the causes of disease and destitution in their strong-

holds and privileged hiding-places. To cleanse the Augean stables of London and of four or five hundred provincial towns, was a labour that Hercules might have shrunk from; for Hercules did his work by strength of muscle, whilst the sanitary reformers applied themselves to their task with the power of reason and the experience of science. Wherever we go, the results are visible, except to those who have eyes and no eyes. In 1842, Mr. Chadwick published his Report on Interments. Ten years before this Report called attention to a general evil, the Kensal Green Cemetery had been established by a Joint-Stock Company. The example was quickly followed at Norwood, at Highgate, and other suburban districts. But these receptacles in which "the sculptur'd urn and monumental bust" were carefully preserved amidst flowery walks and unsullied turf, were for the rich. Horrible grave-yards, revolting to the senses, were to be found in populous places that in the last generation were verdant fields, and in the narrow streets and courts of the City, where its hundred churches seemed to have little use beyond that of gathering in and around them the means of swift destruction to the living. Thirty years ago, there was a sight in St. Bride's church-yard, which often took me out of my rapid course along Fleet Street to look upon. A dog had followed his master to the grave and had remained there for several years, fed indeed by the neighbours, but never straying beyond the gates, which were constantly open. His master's grave was not a solitary one. Year after year the mounds in this church-yard had gone on increasing till the Cholera came in 1855. The back warehouses of my place of business in Fleet

Street looked upon this pestilential spot. I became ill, as were others of my establishment. This gloomy and dangerous area has now been partially closed, and so have nearly all the old burial-places of the metropolis. It is in the interest of the greatest number that they have been closed. For the enforcement and preservation of these general interests, eight statutes have been passed during the last twelve years, which give a power to Burial-Boards to close existing grounds and form new ones, and to keep the closed burial-places in proper order. It would have been impossible that this portion of our sanitary laws should have been worked out by the people themselves, at a large expense and often in opposition to personal feeling, had not the supreme principle of a great public good been paramount to all other considerations.

The carrying out of the Public Health Acts, in their various ramifications, has entirely depended upon the decisions of those who had to sustain the expense. The Local Boards of Health knew well that they must encounter very heavy expenses. The report of a surveyor was a preliminary step, for the consideration of a community whether it would resolutely encounter the addition of a considerable burden to the direct parochial rates, or go on under the old system of indirect taxation in the shape of lingering or acute disease, premature death, the destitution of families. Upon purely economical principles, the decision was right when a community decided that it was cheaper to encounter the direct taxation involved in an ample supply of pure water; in drainage; in paving and surface cleansing; in providing public baths and washhouses; and in esta-

blishing parks and pleasure grounds. I have before me some of the able Reports, so convincing in their practical view of great evils, that the English common sense began quickly to see that the best course was to pay the cost of the necessary remedies. Let me glance at a few of the instances that have come within my own observation.

To the Watering-places on every coast the idle and the busy resort in the pursuit of health. Than some of these twenty years ago, there were no fouler or more pestilential places. I was a summer visitor, with my family, a little before a fatal epidemic made the pretty little town of Sandgate a Golgotha. The official survey of 1849 showed that there was no system of sewerage, that drains discharged upon the beach, that there was no scavengering, that the atmosphere was vitiated by animal and vegetable matter in a state of decay, that nearly all the wells were polluted. Truly a pleasant spot for a summer holiday! Ryde was pronounced to have no proper supply of pure water, and the sewerage and drainage were both inefficient. There was scarely a place to which invalids resort that was not more or less defective in all the great conditions of healthful existence. If these places of luxury were abandoned to ignorance and neglect, what would be the case with great ports, such as Bristol, Portsmouth, and Plymouth? But the evils in such communities were small, compared with the practices and miseries of a great mining and manufacturing population, such as that of Merthyr Tydfil. The fortunate dwellers in houses where there is a full and constant supply of water from public works scarcely know the value of this great blessing. Bad drainage was a common evil; but here the cot-

tages of the thousands of workmen could only be supplied from the distant springs—not by machinery, not from conduits, but by the personal labour of the poor female drudges of every household. The following description by a clergyman of the district seems to carry us back to past ages of uncivilization:—

"During winter there are from six to eight spouts, some half a mile, some a mile, distant from the houses, but in summer they are often reduced to three, the remainder being dried up. At these water-spouts ("pyshtylls" as they call it in Welsh) I have seen fifty, eighty, and as many as a hundred people waiting for their turn; the rule is that each should be supplied according to the time of arriving. The women have told me they have waited six, eight, and ten hours at a time, for their turn; and some then obliged to go away without any water at all. They have been known to wait up the whole of the night. In the case of women having a young family, they are left at home at these times to take care of themselves. Instances have occurred of children being burned to death while their mothers are waiting at the spouts. They have no other supply of water whatever fit to drink in summer time, and have no alternative but to wait." Surely it was time that something should have been done for "the happiness of the greatest number."

It was in large towns that the "Public Health Act" of 1848 had been chiefly working for ten years. In 1858, the "Local Government Act" was passed. The previous General Board of Health had been assailed by the old cry against centralisation, which was often a pretence for doing nothing. One of the ablest officers under the new Act was Mr. Henry Austin, Inspector.

His death was a great loss, not only on account of his professional experience, but from his capacity of taking a broad view of the responsibilities of all engaged in the great social duties involved in the care of the public health. In 1858, he wrote, at my request, a very able article upon the results of sanitary legislation in England, which thus concludes: "The initiation of practical measures of local improvement is made entirely a local concern under the new Local Government Act. By that Act the powers of local authorities are materially extended, and their responsibilities are correspondingly increased. It remains with themselves to determine how long they will reject the blessings and advantages held out to them,—how long they will remain satisfied with the extravagance and misery of neglect,—how long blindly refuse to join in the onward march of civilization, social comfort, and prosperity." ("Companion to Almanac"—1859.) The official administration of this Act and of a subsequent amended Act was entrusted to Mr. Tom Taylor as Secretary. A brilliant writer of wide reputation, he is one of the numerous examples, that the possession of genius and scholarship does not disqualify a man for the steady exercise of administrative functions. The prejudices of modern times have run counter to this opinion, but they are gradually yielding to the conviction, that the knowledge and energy which conduct to distinction in one walk, may be very safely trusted to prevent failure in another sphere of exertion.

The personal sympathy with the needy, and compassion for the ignorant, without which Sanitary Legislation would be incomplete, have not been want-

ing. I have visited many towns where Boards of Health had been established, or were attempted to be established. Seven years ago, when public opinion was often fluctuating between apprehensions of the cost of remedial measures and convictions of their necessity, I saw much of the popular feeling upon this question, in the West of England. Amidst a good deal of apathy and indifference, even in the members of Local Boards, I met with much earnestness and some enthusiasm. But the earnest and the enthusiastic were those who had not been afraid of entering the dwellings of the poor. Such would see how much their privations were increased by their own neglect of the means of healthful existence, in spite of mercenary landlords, and careless town councils. After the command of pure water was placed within their reach, and their houses drained; after the nuisances collected around their doors were abated; they had to learn many lessons which were untaught amidst the dirt and disease of their earlier years. For this teaching there were none so fit as women addressing themselves to women. The various modes in which, whether in the seclusion of the hamlet, or the dark places of the city, ladies have become ministering angels, wherever there is want or suffering, is a characteristic of our times in which we may well rejoice. Foremost amongst their good deeds are their labours in the Education of the Young; but the Diffusion of Sanitary Knowledge has opened a new field for their exertions. The "Ladies' Sanitary Association" has printed a series of Tracts, in which all the great principles of health-preservation are set forth with accurate knowledge and admirable clearness. But it aims at something more than

tract-distributing. In an Address read at Bradford by the lady Secretary of this Association, there are these sensible words: "Our chief reliance must be on oral and practical teaching, and personal influences. In all organizations for visiting the poor, arrangements should be made for giving this practical instruction, and for bringing the influence of the visitors to bear upon the physical as well as the spiritual condition of the people. The latter, preeminently important though it is, certainly should not be so exclusively the object of attention, as it too often is, in the existing organizations for assisting the poor." *

If, in looking back at the state of the public health thirty years ago, we may exclaim, with a reasonable pride, "Are we not improved?" we may equally rejoice that at the same period a spirit was awakened which put an end to the horrible neglect, and the severe treatment, of lunatics. There were not many counties in which there were asylums. There were private establishments, rarely subjected to any efficient supervision, in which insane persons were kept, at a heavy expense. But the pauper lunatic, or idiot, was either shut up in some dark room of the parish workhouse, or left to the unsafe custody of his relations. Bethlem (or Bedlam, as it was called) was the one asylum familiar to the popular mind; and this, for a long series of years, had always been associated with the scenes in Hogarth's "Rake's Progress," in which idle spectators are represented as looking into the cages where "moody madness" lies desolate, or gazing with fear upon the frenzy of the naked

* " tion 1864," 713.

wretch, chained to the floor, who is tearing his own flesh. Dr. Trusler, who "moralizes" upon Hogarth, exclaims, "Was it not for this charitable institution, what dreadful consequences would ensue!" The scandal of permitting the wretched patients of Bethlem to be made a show of, was put an end to; and then came a greater scandal, in the absence of publicity. The secrets of this "prison-house"—a royal institution, supported by ample endowments—were perfectly appalling, as appeared in evidence before a Parliamentary Committee. It has become a model of humane and rational treatment of this heaviest of human evils. There are now more than forty county asylums, and about twenty hospitals, where restraint, even of the gentlest kind, is the exception to the general practice; where the poor creatures are kept happy by exercise and employment; where they are not wholly cut off from their sense of responsibility as intelligent beings. The private asylums are under strict inspection; and the high character of the medical and legal Commissioners is a guarantee that the old frauds and abuses no longer exist, except in the inventions of the novelist.

The contrast between our present penal laws, and those of half a century ago, is one of the most striking examples of the altered aspect of the age. The Criminal Code was one of tremendous severity. Death was the penalty of a hundred and fifty crimes. Minor offences were attempted to be repressed with proportionate severity. The highest penalty was indeed rarely inflicted, in comparison with the number of capital convictions; but the substitute was transportation. The offender was got rid of, and little heed was taken of the crimes and miseries that trans-

portation involved. At last, public opinion was outraged by the rigours of the Criminal Code. Humanity was equally shocked by the certainty that the prisons throughout the land were nurseries of crime; that every convict left the filthy and ill-regulated den in which he had been shut up, a more hardened outcast of society than when he entered its walls. Prison Inspectors were appointed. The grosser evils were removed. Various systems of discipline were resorted to, in which mildness was the general rule. The felon, then, not only fared better than the pauper, but far more luxuriously than many a labourer who maintained his independence. Transportation became impracticable, and the sentence of penal servitude was adopted in the place of banishment to Colonies, where the presence of the depredator had become odious. After a half-century of experiments, our Convict System has, in a great degree, resolved itself into the assertion of principles, which are thus described by one who has done as much as any man for the solution of the most difficult problem that true philanthropy has ever had to decide upon. Matthew Davenport Hill, in a paper read at York, in September, 1864, before the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, thus recorded the triumph which he had lived to see, after years of labour and conflict. My friend has his best reward: "The passing of the new Penal Servitude Act is an event which I trust will form an epoch in the history of our jurisprudence. The treatment of criminals *with the unswerving purpose of reforming them*, deviating neither into indulgence on the one hand, nor into unnecessary harshness on the other; their supervision after discharge, to protect the public

against the danger of their relapse, to protect themselves against unjust suspicion and consequent persecution, and also to afford them some aid in obtaining employment, under the all but overwhelming disadvantages attending their return to society: these, I rejoice to say, are now the accepted principles of our jurisprudence, applicable in greater or less degree to all but capital cases; and I look upon the Penal Servitude Act of the last session as having secured them from vicissitude."

The treatment of criminals, "with the unswerving purpose of reforming them," was long considered one of the Utopian visions of the benevolent. There were natural mistakes committed in the endeavour to realize this idea. Amongst others, was that of making "good conduct" the principle upon which a remission of punishment was to be granted. "Good conduct" is capable of many interpretations. The novelist was not far wrong when he exhibited a hypocritical villain as the pet of magistrates, chaplains, and gaolers. The Home Secretary has now told the proper authorities that "remissions are to be earned by industry alone—steady and laborious industry." The Recorder of Birmingham thus comments upon this wise regulation: "Industry is the ground on which we must build; and, in order that the industry practised in the gaol may continue after the prisoner is at large, it must be willing industry." The forced labour of the treadmill was one of the old mistakes of prison discipline. The convict was degraded by labour without any more profitable results than might have been attained by a steam-engine and a shaft. There could be no reformation when the moral sense, which few wholly lose, was outraged.

Whatever doubts may have arisen, or may still arise, upon the question of effectually reforming adult criminals, none could maintain that Reformatories for juvenile offenders were not better calculated to correct evil habits, and establish good principles, than the gaol, the solitary cell, and the whip. *Reformatories* are schools of industry for those young persons who have violated the laws of their country, and, by magisterial authority, are placed under instruction and discipline. *Refuges* are Industrial Schools, where food and shelter are provided for the houseless and destitute. *Ragged Schools* are for the instruction of the very poorest class, who without such moral and religious teaching might grow up into vagabonds and convicts, and would certainly have little chance of escaping from their rags. Such institutions have been set on foot, and effectually promoted, by very humble persons who saw the misery and vice around them. The noble and the influential came in time to their aid; and have fully deserved such honour as belongs to the labours of Lord Shaftesbury and Mary Carpenter, to promote "the happiness of the greatest number," in taking thought for "the little ones" that were once left to hard taskmasters and profligate parents. One of the most valuable principles of the Factory Acts, in originating which Lord Shaftesbury was mainly instrumental, is the Education of Factory children.

To accomplish the good that is sought to be effected by elevating the very poorest in the social scale, the middle and upper classes have not shrunk from very close contact with the lower. In villages and small towns the duty is easier, and less revolting to delicate natures, than to penetrate into the darkest

recesses of the crowded rooms where misery and crime were formerly left unvisited, except by the police. In boldly fronting the indifference, if not the insults, with which the inspection of their miserable houses was once received by the poorest, the clergy have led the way. They have had the aid of true Deacons, and earnest Sisters of Mercy—not, indeed, set apart for their good work, but devoted to it from a high determination to do something more for their fellow-creatures than merely subscribing to public charities. Forty-five years ago, before such exertions were common, Dr. Chalmers, one of the wisest of Christian teachers, proclaimed that "the law of reciprocal attraction between one heart and another is a law of nature as well as of Christianity, insomuch that no sooner does the regard of a philanthropist for the people of his district come to be recognized, than their regard for him, and that, too, both from the converted and unconverted, will attest of what kind of material our humanity is formed. . . . . . Though the ministration of gold and silver be that which fortune hath altogether denied him, it is both very striking and very encouraging to behold how, in spite of themselves, he steals the hearts of the people away from them; how, as if by the operation of some mystic spell, the most restless and profligate of them all, feel the softening influence of his presence and of his 'doings'!"

There is a book which may truly be called beautiful, in its pious earnestness, as conspicuous as its ability—"The Missing Link." The name of the book is derived from the experiment which has been successfully made, of employing poor women to carry religious teaching to the homes of poor women—to

set on foot "Female Missions to the dens of London." Truly does the authoress of this book say, "The City Missionary and the Scripture Reader cannot accomplish this Woman's Mission. They meet in their morning rounds chiefly with women, dirty, lazy, and drunken; or, if industrious, at their work. Their husbands are generally 'at work,' and in some cases they complain of the spiritual visit paid to their wives, as 'just hindering them and bothering them.' But we do not find that they have anything to say against our 'Marians,' and 'Marthas,' and 'Sarahs,' and 'Rebeccas.' These have all met with a genuine welcome from the Lower House of Lords, who know that their wives want teaching the common arts of life, and that even their own comfort depends upon the lesson being learned."

One of the main objects of these "Passages" having been to trace the progress of Popular Education and the Diffusion of Knowledge, it is scarcely necessary that I should here enter upon this subject, as one of the evidences of that regard for "the greatest number" which I deem a characteristic of the present time. One of the most satisfactory results of educational improvement has been, that the great body of the people have learnt better how to take care of their own happiness. With diffused wealth accompanying diffused knowledge, the grosser vices of the middle class have vanished. The riot and indelicacy that characterised the so-called enjoyments of too many of the traders, at the beginning of the century, have given place to the tranquil pleasures of Home, with some taste for Art and Literature. The reform of manners began somewhat earlier with the higher class. In the same way,

whatever coarseness and profligacy may still exist in the lower, drunkenness, and blasphemy, and indecency, are not the habits of the artisan class, but are the exceptions. It has been found out by those who undertake to teach their inferiors in station, that to wean them from coarse gratifications they must have rational amusements. Hence "Penny Readings," and Cheap Concerts. Those who belong to what is called "the wage class" are becoming capitalists. They have learnt the value of the *aide toi* principle. Lord Stanley, in a recent address to a Mechanics' Institute, thus described the causes which are carrying forward "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," over which they have themselves control:—"I say, keep your independence, keep your self-reliance, and never fear but you will continue to do well. The work in which you are engaged is only part—it may be but a small part—of a great national movement. The school, the institute, the cheap newspaper, the cheap book, go together with the benefit society, the savings bank, the freehold cottage, the co-operative mill, and better still, the co-operative store. The object of all these is one—to lighten the heavy and threefold burden of ignorance, of poverty, and of labour. Failure there may be; mistakes there occasionally will be; there may be long delay and temporary falling back; but that that end will in some not inconsiderable degree be attained, is not only the earnest hope, but the confident expectation, of those in whose thoughts the welfare and the greatness of England are most constantly present."

There are exceptional instances of employers of workmen, who look with jealousy and apprehension

upon the means thus described, for advancing the welfare of the greatest number by "self-help." They scarcely dare to avow that Savings Banks, by which the receivers of wages are often enabled to become rivals in the employment of labour, are an abomination; but the Co-operative principle, in all its various forms, they hold to be dangerous to the natural and established order of society. There are also masters and mistresses of families, who do not "patronise," as their phrase is, the cheap newspaper and the cheap book. The school, they think, may do some future good; but their belief is that it has done very much present harm. In domestic matters, it is their common complaint that Education has destroyed the old character of servants—that good female servants, especially, cannot be obtained, for National Schools have set them above their work This complaint, whether just or not, involves questions which belong to our general social condition, of which the extent of domestic service in England is a remarkable feature. The increase of this section of the population, during the last thirty years, is one of the striking evidences of the increase of the means of household expenditure amongst the middle classes. In 1831, the female servants were about one *thirteenth* of the total female population; in ,1861, they were about *one-tenth.* Out of a million of female domestics it is easily to be imagined that there are abundant specimens of the ignorance and conceit that make up what the satirists call *servant-gallism.* One who has laboured long and earnestly in the preparation of efficient "Teachers of the People," has taken a most sensible view of the question of "Domestic Service

as affected by Popular Education." When there was more distinction between the different orders of society, there was less separation. "The parlour was not so far off from the kitchen as it is now. In particular, the mistress saw more of her maidens, knew more about their work, and shared it to a greater extent than is at all common in these times. Now, she sits apart on Olympus. . . . . . The boarding-school is more responsible for this change than the national school. . . . . . The homely remark which I have heard from an elderly housekeeper is much to the purpose—'Mistresses used to teach their servants.'" * What is called "the plague of servants" would be speedily abated, if the coldness and neglect of too many heads of families did not set up a bar of separation between the payers and the receivers of wages. It is the common mistake to believe that there is not a reciprocity of obligation. It is the especial mistake of a vast number of ignorant or imperfectly educated heads of families, to shudder at the slightest approach of their domestics to what they deem an evident imitation of the manners of their superiors, as exhibited in the power of reading novels or writing letters. This greater independence of domestic servants—their increased power of expending their wages upon dress, and their leisure upon their own gratifications—belongs to the general uplifting of every class into an approximation to the habits of the class above them. The increase of national wealth has necessarily caused its distribution through the smaller veins of the body politic, as well as the larger.

* "The Teachers of the People." By the Rev. Derwent Coleridge. 1862.

At the beginning of the century, our great philosophic poet wrote, amongst his "Sonnets dedicated to Liberty," several in which he laments over the tendencies of his age. He is—

> "opprest,
> To think that now our life is only drest
> For show; mean handiwork of craftsman, cook,
> And groom."

Avarice and Prodigality were once held to be antagonistic. In Pope's verse, "lordly luxury" is opposed to "city gain." Wordsworth saw the beginning of a change, from the old frugal spirit of the middle class, by whom money was slowly saved, to the passion for hasty acquisition, and the passion for profuse display. This is not

> "The sense to value riches, with the art
> To enjoy them."

To the commercial man, wholly possessed with the dominant idea of making a fortune, and at the same time urged on to expense for the sake of appearances, the vice and the folly bring their own curses. These efforts sap the foundations of the old trading morality of England. There are too many whose respectability is based upon the worship of

> "Rapine, avarice, expense—
> This is idolatry; and these we adore:
> Plain living, and high thinking, are no more."

The prevalence of these "middle class" examples has had no inconsiderable share in producing profligate and unhappy children. The sons will not marry, until they can live in the style of their parents; the daughters will drive away every suitor who is not reputed rich. Vain regrets over lost

opportunities and ridiculous waste, make the Present miserable and the Future dark, to the head of such a household.

A political economist, who professes to speak the opinion of "the middle class" of this country, says that "the life of a man who leaves no property, or family provision, of his own acquiring, at his death, is felt to have been a failure." I do not accept the doctrine as a true expression of the general feeling. There are thousands of the commercial class and the professional class, who have not been inordinately anxious to gather together "muckhills" of riches, to be spread abroad when their accumulators are gone. Nevertheless, these have not been like the "wicked and unprofitable servant," who buried the one talent which his Master entrusted to him. Few of them, probably, have neglected to make some modest provision against absolute poverty which the system of Life Assurance affords. But, if they have wisely incurred a liberal expenditure of capital upon the education of their children; if they have placed their sons in positions where they may "learn and labour truly to get their own living;" if they have qualified their daughters to discharge sensibly and gracefully, whether as child, wife, or mother, the private and public duties which render the English lady the promoter of all social dignity and enjoyment, they have been amongst the most provident accumulators. They have laid up a profitable fund out of their consumption, by preserving their families, whilst they have lived amongst them, in the highest point of efficiency for future production. This doctrine may not be strictly the *science* of "the wealth of nations,"

but I believe that it has something to do with "the happiness of the greatest number."

In many worldly respects my own life has not been "a failure." It was probably a blessing in disguise, that circumstances, over which I had little control, long ago taught me that it was not for me to make a fortune, or to indulge in the ostentation of ample means. I have been content with the "plain living" that the philosophic poet sets above a life "only drest for show." If "high thinking" have not been altogether wanting, I owe this to a love of books, and perhaps not less to the companionship of educated and intelligent friends. I believe that I have made very few enemies. Within my own proper sphere I have had as much social enjoyment as is compatible with the belief that "the chief end of man" is duty and not pleasure.

The fiftieth anniversary of my marriage has just passed. Half a century of congenial wedlock is a blessing accorded to few. It brought with it the further blessing of a family united in love; of a home where cheerful faces ever welcomed me. During forty years I had known no great sorrow. I had not been bereft of any one of those who were the joy of my manhood, and the comfort of my age. A dark cloud has cast its solemn shadow over my Golden Bridal; but I feel that our griefs, and the consolations which should come with them, are for ourselves, and not for the outer world. Taken as a whole, my life has been a happy one.

During the progress of these "Passages," I have, as far as I could, steadily resisted the temptation of entering upon any details of my private circumstances or domestic relations. If, in closing this

narrative, I have stepped for an instant across the boundary line which I prescribed to myself, and if I look not beyond my own home for one to whom I can offer a concluding tribute of affection, I must be forgiven, in the consideration that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh:"

TO MY WIFE;

TO HER WHO HAS BEEN THE BEST FRIEND,

THE ADVISER, THE SYMPATHIZER, THE CONSOLER,

DURING HALF A CENTURY OF MY WORKING LIFE,

I INSCRIBE THIS RECORD,

WITH A GRATEFUL HEART TO THE GIVER OF ALL GOOD.

January 16, 1865.

"AND HERE WILL I MAKE AN END. AND IF I HAVE DONE WELL, AND AS IS FITTING THE STORY, IT IS THAT WHICH I DESIRED; BUT IF SLENDERLY AND MEANLY, IT IS THAT WHICH I COULD ATTAIN UNTO."—*II. Maccabees*, XV, 37, 38.

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